**University of Alberta**

# On the Genealogy of the Bad Conscience:
# An Interpretation of the 2nd Essay of Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morality*

by

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Abstract

Section by section commentary and interpretation of the second essay of Friedrich Nietzsche's 'On the Genealogy of Morality.' I treat the Genealogy as a presentation of the moral psychology that contributes to what Nietzsche treats as modern morality (which includes Christian and secular forms of morality). Specifically, each essay presents one facet of that psychology: ressentiment, cruelty and the response to suffering. My interpretation focuses on Nietzsche's presentation of the development of morality and the moral bad conscience out of premoral elements, including the underlying psychological factors.

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List of Abbreviations

(All abbreviations refer to the following books of Nietzsche's)

A – The Antichrist

BGE – Beyond Good and Evil

BT – The Birth of Tragedy

D – Daybreak

EH – Ecce Homo

- EH:W – 1. Why I am so wise
- EH:C – 2. Why I am so clever
- EH:B – Why I write such good books
- EH:D – 4. Why I am a destiny

GM – On the Genealogy of Morality

HH – Human, All Too Human

JS – The Joyous Science (or The Gay Science)

TI – Twilight of the Idols

Z – Thus Spoke Zarathustra

Introduction

My ambition in this interpretive study is to understand Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morality* as he himself intended for it to be understood. More specifically, my focus will be on the second essay, "Guilt, Bad Conscience and Related Matters." There are a number of ways such a study could be approached, but put most generally, I approach this as I would any work I consider to have been created by a serious writer. That is, I make the provisional assumption that he has a coherent point to make and that he knows more than I do about the subject matter. As such, should I find a problem in his account, I first turn to the rest of the text to see if the he is aware of the problem and to see if he has an answer that I previously overlooked. This is to say that I try to learn from the author, and the only way I can reach an understanding of his teaching is through a careful examination of the text that he saw fit to provide. Again, granting as a matter of 'interpretive charity' that the author is coherent and intelligent, the text should ultimately be sufficient to gain access to his intended meaning. All of this might at first appear to be extravagant 'generosity' to the author, but the purpose of this approach is to serve the reader, to enable him to take everything he can from the author.

Nietzsche himself actually addresses this point of interpretation quite frequently in his work. Indeed, even in the *Genealogy* itself, he gives some indication as to how he should be read. For instance, in the preface, he warns that it is not enough to read merely through his work. Certainly, slow, careful reading is necessary (cf. D P.5), but this by itself is too passive; one cannot just 'absorb' the text. A more active effort is required, that of interpretation – of 'rumination' (GM P.8). Of course, such 'interpretation' is not the relativist's freedom of deciding the text means whatever he wants. Rather, it is the struggle to come to share the author's own perspective on his writing and the meaning of his work.[1] To understand what this interpretive effort entails, it is instructive to consider Nietzsche's discussion on interpretation later in the *Genealogy*. Offering advice to his fellow "knowers" and "gentleman philosophers," Nietzsche speaks of the need to use different perspectives and "affective interpretations" to gain knowledge (3.12). It is by

[1] In the preface, Nietzsche speaks of this need to share the author's perspective on the work: "As far as my *Zarathustra* is concerned, for example, I count no one an authority on it who has not at sometime been deeply wounded and at sometime deeply delighted by each of its words: for only then may he enjoy the privilege of reverent participation in the halcyon element out of which the work was born, in its sunny brightness, distance, expanse, and certainty" (P.8).

integrating these disparate viewpoints that the interpreter forms a synthetic concept of what he is studying. By allowing "*more* affects" to speak in the evaluation, and bringing "*more* eyes, different eyes" to bear on the matter of study, the interpreter will gain a more complete concept of the matter in question. In terms of studying a phenomenon of the world, this interpretive approach assumes, at least provisionally, that there is a coherent whole to what one is studying. If this is the case, then the synthesized concept (to the degree it is complete) corresponds more or less well to that whole. To apply this advice to the interpretation of a text, this whole would seem to be the author's meaning, what he is trying to teach through his work. It is the interpreter's task to understand that intended meaning.[2]

As mentioned, this is to make some provisional assumptions about the text itself. Nietzsche asks for careful reading, and I assume to warrant this, he is himself a meticulous writer. This is to say that I assume he is careful to be consistent throughout the text and to write in such a way that what he says does form a coherent whole. Such consistency is necessary, for the only access to the intended meaning is through the text provided by the author. In studying the text, the interpreter must determine how the different parts (e.g. the arguments, themes, sections and chapters) relate to each other and how they form the larger whole. In places, something in the text might seem to contradict other parts of it; but making the assumption of coherency, the interpreter must investigate as to whether the author has indeed made a mistake or whether there is not a deeper justification for the conflict. It may be that the apparent contradictions can be coherently explained in light of the meaning of the work.[3] Through encountering and overcoming these initial problems, the interpreter comes to have a much fuller, more penetrating understanding of the work and of the subject matter with which the work is concerned.

In reaching an understanding of the larger meaning of the work as a whole, one gains a higher perspective. This is not 'just another perspective,' as each of the different

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[2] The ultimate question of the text is how well the author's understanding conforms to the truth of the world. To be able to assess this, however, the interpreter must first have come to terms with what the author himself wrote. Of course, this exact perspective might never be reached. The interpreter should guard against abandoning the effort too soon, however, otherwise he will learn little from the author, and his criticisms will be only of his own simplistic reading.

[3] It may even be that the author deliberately crafted his work to contain such apparent problems in order to try to perplex his readers and encourage them (or at least some of them) to struggle to an improved understanding.

parts might be called a partial perspective on the whole teaching. Rather, this is a 'synoptic' perspective, which understands how the disparate perspectives fit into the larger whole. From this higher perspective, the interpreter is able to see a unity not obviously apparent from the partial perspectives. Of course, these lower perspectives cannot be abandoned; to do so would be to risk (or virtually guarantee) that the interpretation of the whole would amount to a 'flight of fancy.' The interpreter must shift perspectives, again looking closely at the text to see if the interpretation is justified. Upon returning to the text, he might have a new appreciation of the part he is studying, perhaps making new discoveries within it. Or perhaps he will notice similarities with other parts of the text or conflicts that were not previously apparent. The interpretation of the whole will thus require further refinement. Again, the interpreter will have to go back down to the lower perspectives to check his interpretation as well as to see if there is yet more to be learned. Through this process, the interpreter may rise to ever higher perspectives, aiming towards the author's own synoptic understanding of the text.[4]

This method of perspective shifting, of ascending and descending, interpreting and checking, seems to me what Nietzsche asks of his readers. That it corresponds to his advice on philosophizing (3.12) points to perhaps the most important aspect of this type of reading. In studying the various parts of the text, and trying to rise above them; in shifting between perspectives, continually testing one's interpretations; in returning to the text to build on one's understanding so that one can look down from ever higher perspectives – such a manner of reading *is* philosophizing. A book written in such a way that it encourages and facilitates this kind of reading is a pedagogical tool; it is designed to train the interpretive 'eye' for philosophical study, not just of other texts, but of the world and life itself. This is the promise offered by the great philosophical works.

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[4] In BGE 30, Nietzsche (following previous philosophers) distinguishes these different perspectives as the 'esoteric' and the 'exoteric.' These are not (as the name would imply) so much a matter of an insider-outsider perspective, but rather, a perspective based ultimately on height; the 'exoteric' is the perspective from below, whereas the 'esoteric' looks down from above. In this aphorism, Nietzsche focuses on this distinction marking a rank order of souls. It is not only what the individual can understand, but what truths he can bear. However, while there may be some predispositions towards the different perspectives, the 'esoteric' is not given; one must 'climb' towards it, and in doing so, gradually become 'acclimatized' to the discoveries made. Or as Nietzsche puts it in *Zarathustra*, one must be able to bear the thin air and cold climate of high mountaintops (Z 1.Of Reading and Writing; cf. GM 2.24).

I do not claim to have climbed to such immense height in my own study. Many questions linger, and I am sure other problems remain unnoticed – but by holding onto and testing this "method" of assuming Nietzsche's consistency and intelligence, I believe I have resolved many problems that arose in my initial readings, and in so doing, I have reached a more comprehensive understanding, first of the second essay itself, and then of the work as a whole.

In the interpretive essay that follows, I will present this understanding. I begin by working through the second essay, critically examining it section by section. The sections are grouped into chapters according to what seem to me to be natural divisions in the second essay. Towards the later part of my interpretation, it is necessary to collect the discussion of previous sections and bring it to bear on the later parts of the essay; at these points I will include synthetic commentary chapters. Before moving to the investigation itself, however, I will first offer some comments by way of an overview of the *Genealogy* as a whole as well as of the particular essay on which I am focusing.

## 2. On the Genealogy of Morality: A Polemic

The later part of my analysis of the second essay requires an extended discussion of the whole of the *Genealogy* (cf. Chapter 10), but a general foundation for understanding the *Genealogy* can be provided by means of a consideration of its title.

### On the Genealogy (*Zur Genealogie*)

Nietzsche did not entitle his work, "*The* Genealogy of Morality" but rather *On* (or *Towards*) the Genealogy of Morality. Nietzsche's study is not necessarily meant to be an exhaustive account of morality; perhaps more could be said – even *should* be said – about the origins of 'morality.' And indeed, it seems that Nietzsche hoped that this work would inspire further analysis (cf. Note in 1.17). However, as will be discussed below, what Nietzsche *does* say is enough to serve the purpose of this *polemical* text.

As to the second part of the title, what is a "genealogy?" In its conventional meaning, it is a 'family tree' tracing out the ancestral lines of an individual or a family. Typically a genealogy is created to illustrate one's connection to a noble origin and thus derive prestige or legitimacy from that connection. This conventional meaning does have

some relevance to what Nietzsche means by 'genealogy,' but the term is given new meaning through Nietzsche's use of it. In 2.12 and 13, Nietzsche directly comments upon his "historical methodology," illuminating what he means by 'genealogy.' Nietzsche's "major point for historiography" is that the origin of something – be it a practice, an organ, a concept, a religious cult, or whatever – is completely separate from the purpose that it subsequently comes to serve. To illustrate, I will follow Nietzsche's example and speak of the practice of punishment, but the genealogical method is meant to apply to all origins. The practice of punishment (however it originally came into being) is again and again reinterpreted and given new meaning, new purpose (e.g. deterrence, isolation, alleviating vengeful feelings of others). The original practice is subordinated to higher concerns, becoming one functioning part in a larger structure, such as the place of punishment in a judicial system. An important clarification is made on this point of historical methodology in section 2.13 (the central section of the central essay): while a practice might be directed to a new purpose, the original purpose might not be completely forgotten. It might retain some of its original character, or the character imposed by a reinterpretation at some other point in its history. It is in this central chapter that Nietzsche reveals the particular use of his form of genealogy (using the example of punishment). There he describes a late stage in history, when there have been many preceding transformations of the object or concept in question:

> In a very late stage of culture [...] the concept 'punishment' in fact no longer represents a single meaning at all but rather an entire synthesis of 'meanings': the previous history of punishment in general, the history of its exploitation for the most diverse purposes, finally crystallizes into a kind of unity that is difficult to dissolve, difficult to analyze and—one must emphasize—is completely and utterly *undefinable*. [...] In an earlier stage, by contrast, that synthesis of 'meanings' still appears more soluble, also more capable of shifts [...] (2.13).

A genealogical study is useful in that, by considering its historical evolution, one can better identify the constituting elements before they became 'crystallized'. One will thus

gain a better understanding of how these combine together and influence the synthetic form as a whole.[5] Nietzsche criticizes those who stop at the identification of form, however. The more important question is, *how* did the change occur? What was the underlying force (or forces) that brought about the change, making the different elements coalesce into the synthesis?[6] Nietzsche's concern with underlying forces can be seen in his genealogical study of morality.

**A Genealogy of Morality**

In the *Genealogy*, Nietzsche is not providing a genealogy of all morality; he also discusses "noble morality," but mostly in order to contrast it to the type of morality that he focuses on, that which he calls "slave morality." When Nietzsche refers to 'morality,' he means slave morality; he treats it as morality *per se* because it has been the dominant form in much of known history, and is generally the only type of morality recognized today. Put most generally, 'slave morality' is based upon the ascetic ideal: selflessness, self-denial, altruism – these are deemed good whereas the opposites are condemned. When such an ideal is treated as an 'end-in-itself,' Nietzsche claims that the effect is that morality goes against life, condemning earthly existence and all that is associated with it in the name of transcendent, otherworldly concepts. As such, Nietzsche also speaks of this morality as "anti-natural" morality in later works (*TI* Morality as Anti-Nature). In particular, Nietzsche focuses on Christian morality. He does this because it is the most extreme, most powerful manifestation of 'slave morality,' and it also has had the most significant effect on contemporary morality (which Nietzsche treats as a secular inheritor of Christianity). But it is essential to understand that Christianity is only *one instance* of

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[5] In the introduction to her translation of the *Genealogy* (p.xxv), Clark following Wittgenstein likens this to picking out the various strands of a rope, seeing how they together form the rope. This is a useful image, as long as one understands that the conceptual strands might have no relation to each other than that, for whatever reason, they were bound into a larger whole.

[6] In contrast to the genealogical method is the construction of a 'natural history.' This latter study is primarily inductive: one collects all the instances of something in order to make generalities. In *BGE*, for example, Nietzsche carries out such a study "On the Natural History of Morality" (part 5). From his observations, he generalizes two types of morality: slave and noble morality (BGE 260). The Genealogical method is analytical: one traces the historical development to break down the object of study into its composite parts, as well as to identify how it was that these came together over time.

the general type. Nietzsche's analysis applies to all forms of "anti-natural" morality, including other "moralized religions" (3.18) and modern, secular morality.[7]

As mentioned, Nietzsche uses a genealogy to separate the aspects or meanings that have combined into a 'crystallized' concept. The book itself is structured for such an analysis, with each of the three essays isolating for the purpose of analysis a single strand that has become part of the complex concept of morality. Nietzsche discusses this particular structural presentation of the *Genealogy* in an illuminating letter to his friend Franz Overbeck:

> for the sake of clarity, it was necessary artificially to isolate the different roots of that complex structure that is called morality. Each of these three essays expresses a single *primum mobile*; a fourth and fifth are missing, as is even the most essential ('the herd instinct') – for the time being, the latter had to be ignored, as too comprehensive, and the same holds for the ultimate summation of all those different elements and thus a final account of morality. [...] (Each essay makes a contribution on the origin of Christianity; it is not enough to explain [the origin of Christianity] with the help of only a single psychological category.)[8]

As I mentioned above, Nietzsche's use of a genealogy is not merely to understand the current form better. This is *one* use of a genealogy, and in this work, morality itself is broken up and considered. The larger question, however, is in regards to the various *active* forces that brought about morality – the forces that lead to the "moralization" (the process of making something moral). The *Genealogy* presents underlying psychological

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[7] Like many other commentators, Raymond Geuss focuses too much on Christianity in his essay, "Nietzsche and Genealogy." That said, Nietzsche's presentation of the origin of Christianity is an major part of the *Genealogy*. Along with presenting an excellent understanding of the purpose of a Nietzschean genealogy itself, Geuss offers a detailed genealogy of the changing beliefs within Christianity by using the *Antichrist* and Christian history to expand on the formal claims about Christianity that Nietzsche makes in the *Genealogy*. (That Nietzsche offers mostly formal descriptions in the *Genealogy* is another indication that he means his critique to apply to various manifestations of this type of morality rather than just Christianity). [Raymond Geuss, "Nietzsche and Genealogy," *European Journal of Philosophy* 2 (1994).]

[8] Postcard from January 4, 1888 – p.224, vol.8 of collected letters. Translated in Matthias Risse's essay, "The Second Treatise in *On the Genealogy of Morality*: Nietzsche on the Origin of the Bad Conscience." (Risse does not quote the whole letter, and so I had to translate the final bracketed sentence)

impulses (or 'categories') as the originating sources of morality (the '*primum mobile*'), with each essay presenting a single aspect of this moral psychology. This presentation corresponds with Nietzsche's advice on philosophizing, that one needs to study something from different perspectives and affective interpretations. The *Genealogy* offers the interpreter such a philosophical study: in each essay, one sees life and the belief in morality through the eyes of a particular *affect*. The first essay presents *ressentiment*, the second, cruelty, and the third, the desperate need to respond to and understand human suffering (particularly one's own).[9] These impulses are described as becoming dominant in certain people, motivating the 'hijacking' and reinterpretation of previously amoral concepts, transforming them into what become moral concepts (the economic concept of 'debt,' for example, becomes a moral concern). This moral psychology suggests why there is this human ('all-too-human') tendency towards moralization, why it is that in historically and culturally diverse societies, "anti-natural" morality arises. It does so under the impetus of these psychological forces, and this morality is in turn accepted by others because it satisfies (and exacerbates) these underlying impulses.

As the letter indicates, even when considered together, these three psychological impulses do not account for the whole of morality. There are other aspects that would also have to be considered. However, the discussion of these particular psychological aspects of morality is enough for Nietzsche's immediate purposes of the *Genealogy*, which can now be discussed.[10]

**A Polemic (*Streitschriften*)**

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[9] That the *Genealogy* is fundamentally a *psychological* presentation is suggested in Nietzsche's comments in *Ecce Homo*: the *Genealogy* presents "three preliminary studies by a psychologist for the revaluation of all values" (EH.B.GM).

[10] That this is a presentation of moral psychology has not been sufficiently appreciated. In part, this is because scholars have focused on the effects, on what the 'morality' is, rather than asking further as to the active forces behind it. For example, in her generally quite informative introduction to her translation, Clark treats each essay as displaying one strand of morality: the first the type of virtuous or good individual, the second the duties and obligations of such a person (I will disagree with this below), and the third presenting an answer to the meaning of human life. Only considering these "reactive" results, Clark describes the strands as interweaving to form morality – but as if they do so by themselves rather than under the dominating impetus of some outside force. In Geuss' essay on the *Genealogy*, as mentioned, he focuses solely on Christianity, and while he appreciates *ressentiment*'s forceful role, he otherwise focuses on the *effects* of these underlying impulses forces.

Nietzsche subtitles this work "a polemic." Like his other books following *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, the *Genealogy* is primarily part of Nietzsche's "no-saying, *no-doing*" task (EH:B.BGE); that is, it is meant to help undermine modern beliefs. This destructive task is for a higher purpose, for clearing the way for Nietzsche's "Yes-saying" work by freeing minds for new pursuits and ideals. Nietzsche speaks of this at the end of the second essay and I will discuss this purpose at that point.

That the book is a polemic, however, helps explain Nietzsche's use of genealogy. As mentioned above, conventional genealogies are used to legitimate and give prestige to the present generation by connecting it to some noble origin. In this polemic, Nietzsche is using genealogy for the opposite purpose: he reveals the ugly, ignoble origins in order to denigrate and thus undermine the belief in certain concepts. Nietzsche's genealogical method need not be used so destructively, however; it could be a generally useful analytic method for studying the history of an object or practice, separating the complex structure that the object of study has become.[11] With the specific subject of morality, however, a genealogy is a destructive form of analysis if for no other reason than that it presents morality as a historically bound concept – *not*, that is, as something eternal, outside of human invention. Moreover, 'slave morality' treats itself as absolute and unconditional: what is deemed good is elevated to the 'good-in-itself' without exception. What is evil cannot be part of the good; evil can *only* contaminate and devalue.

Nietzsche offers a partial account of morality, but the particular moralizing impulses he presents are especially harmful to the pretensions of morality. That morality emerges from self-serving impulses is bad enough, but the ugliness of *ressentiment* and the violence of cruelty are exceptionally well suited for disturbing the confidence of one beholden to morality. A reader committed to these moral beliefs will be appalled by Nietzsche's suggestion. If he does not throw the book away in disgust, however, but instead gains some understanding of the implications of Nietzsche's discussion and recognizes some of the truth of it, this person's beliefs will be shaken. For a reader not so

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[11] This claim is contra Foucault who treats Genealogy (and reason itself) as necessarily subversive. Foucault goes as far as to say that Nietzsche changed his mind about history, that whereas in *UD*, Nietzsche condemned history that went against life, Nietzsche now embraced critical history. Foucault's reading of Nietzsche is rather selective, given that Nietzsche explicitly claims that his work is *not* ultimately meant to be destructive, but to serve a higher, constructive purpose (2.24; cf. EH D.7). [M. Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *Language, Memory, Practice* (1977)]

committed to 'morality,' however, Nietzsche's claims will not be so disturbing. Such a reader could grant that the base can lead to the sublime, or accept such goading claims as "the moral conceptual world [...], like the beginning of everything great on earth, was thoroughly and prolongedly drenched in blood" (2.6).

This being a polemic, Nietzsche at times exaggerates the effects of morality, considering only extreme cases, or at other times ignoring the benefits and positive aspects of morality.[12] In Nietzsche's previous 'no-saying' book, the provocatively titled *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche is not *as* unrelenting in his attack; he even grants a few kind words to Christianity, or at least to its effects (e.g. BGE 61, 188, 189). Were Nietzsche to be kinder in his present analysis of morality, he might more openly discuss some of the less ugly aspects of the moral psychology, such as the longing for justice as a source of moral commitments and moral gods (cf. 3.27, the belief in an "ethical world order and ethical final intentions").

As stated above, however, my primary goal is to understand what Nietzsche is trying to accomplish with the 2nd essay. As such, I do not attempt to defend Nietzsche's selected targets – though I grant that such a defense would be useful in bringing to light subtler aspects of Nietzsche's teaching, perhaps highlighting those features of his target that he finds most dangerous and irredeemable.

## 3. 2nd Essay: Guilt (or Debt), Bad Conscience and Related Matters

Before turning to a focused consideration of the second essay, I will offer a few comments on the essay as a whole. The essay is fairly substantial, and while I do offer commentary on every section, I nevertheless concentrate on certain parts of the essay to the neglect of other parts. Sections 12 and 13, for example, could be dwelt upon to learn more about Nietzsche's thoughts on history (perhaps in comparison with his earlier essay on *The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*). Or sections 9-13 and their extended discussion of punishment would provide for a lengthy study in itself. I will discuss punishment in the relevant sections and in the later account of moralization (particularly

[12] To clarify Nietzsche's 'immoralism,' he is not simply teaching the opposite of morality, to do everything that is deemed evil (the 'Antichrist' is not Satanic). Nietzsche still maintains standards: "beyond good and evil" does not mean "beyond good and bad" (1.17). Cf. Daybreak 103: "it goes without saying that I do not deny, presupposing I am no fool, that many actions called immoral ought to be avoided and resisted, or that many called moral ought to be done and encouraged—but *for different reasons than formerly*."

in relation to the idea of free will), but this will not be the weight of my study. Rather, my focus will be on the latter parts of the essay, covering the earlier sections as discussions that gain importance in being interpreted with the later sections. I choose these later sections because their subject matter is most directly indicated by the title of the essay: Nietzsche is presenting the origins of the bad conscience and its subsequent moralization into the consciousness of guilt (2.4) – this is a genealogy of the *moral* bad conscience.[13] Along with the title of the essay, Nietzsche's comments in *Ecce Homo* on the structure of the essays in the *Genealogy* recommend such a focus on the later sections (EH B.GM):

> Every time a beginning that is *calculated* to mislead: cool, scientific, even ironic, deliberately foreground, deliberately holding off. Gradually more unrest; sporadic lightning; very disagreeable truths are heard grumbling in the distance—until eventually a *tempo feroce* is attained in which everything rushes ahead in a tremendous tension. In the end, in the midst of perfectly gruesome detonations, a *new* truth becomes visible every time among thick clouds.

The first two sections seem particularly disjoined from the rest of the essay, but also several of the subsequent sections seem tangential to the subject of the bad conscience. It is not until section 16 that Nietzsche finally presents his hypothesis on the origin of the bad conscience. The earlier sections, however, are part of this genealogy of the *moral* bad conscience: they present one 'ancestor strand,' that of the concept of debt (2.4-7, 8-11, 19-20), a concept that must be combined and *moralized* in conjunction with the premoral bad conscience (2.16-18), thus bringing about the *moral* bad conscience and

[13] There has been surprisingly little written on the 2nd essay other than on the discussions of punishment and genealogy. As mentioned above, Clark claims that the 2nd essay presents the strand of morality consisting of the answer to the question, "what is my duty?, what do I owe others?" I am unsure why she says this, as she offers no defense of the claim, focusing instead on the 1st and 3rd essay – but it seems to me that it is the other essays that answer this question of the content of duty and obligation: one's duty is to do 'good,' and eschew 'evil,' or one's duty is to be ascetic, and one owes such behavior to others. The 2nd essay is about the moral sentiments beneath these obligations, the bad conscience that prompts a person towards these. As referred to above, there is an excellent paper by Matthias Risse on the bad conscience itself; he focuses on the proper subject of the essay, but unfortunately, along with focusing too much on Christianity, he only considers sections 16-22, not discussing the important ways that the rest of the essay – and indeed, the whole book – must be brought to bear on these sections.

concept of guilt. The process of this moralization is presented in sections 21 and 22 (the "*tempo feroce*" in the discussion) analyzing the moralization of the concept of God, of the concept of guilt, of the bad conscience, and also presenting the underlying force driving all of these transformations. Explaining this moralization and the various forms of the bad conscience is my primary focus in this interpretation (cf. esp. Chapters 9,10). The sections that conclude the essay are particularly important as well, representing the "*new* truth" that Nietzsche offers. In these final sections (23-25), Nietzsche presents a contrast to the slavishness and morbid sickness presented in all of the preceding sections, directing sympathetic readers to the prospect of a nobler type of man characterized by "*great health*." As with the moralization, this "ennoblement" also requires returning to the previous sections, connecting the disparate strands so as to see the essay as a whole, uncovering the deeper consistency beneath the seeming disjointedness, and thus appreciating Nietzsche's larger teaching.

Chapter 1 (Sections 1-3): The Scope of the Investigation[14]

The first three sections effectively establish the developmental scope of the second essay. Section one begins with the original human animal, asking how it could be bred into an animal with the entitlement to make promises – this is the "paradoxical task of nature." It also presents a preliminary process that must be undergone, a 'preparatory task,' which is essentially the task of breeding an animal that is *capable* of making promises (but not yet *entitled* to do so). Section two moves to the end of this "enormous process," providing an image of the finished product of the "paradoxical task": the "sovereign individual" who possess this entitlement to promise. Section three briefly outlines *part* of the intermediary stage between these first sections, covering the 'preparatory task of nature.' The product at the end of this third section is a human who no longer relies wholly on instinct, but instead has been forced to use and develop his rational capacities. This human has made promises, entering some form of social pact and is now bound by these promises. However, he is not yet free of the "ethic of custom;" he is not the sovereign individual who is a "master of a free will," commanding and obeying only himself. Something more must be accomplished for the "paradoxical task" to be completed.

All of this said, the relation of these sections to the rest of the essay is not immediately evident. That they stand apart is indicated at the beginning of section four when Nietzsche introduces the question suggested by the title of the essay, namely, the question of the origin of the *moral* bad conscience (the consciousness of guilt). Sections 1 and 2, in particular, seem to have no relation to the rest of the text, as there is no subsequent mention of the Sovereign Individual or the entitlement to make promises. The connection of section 3 to the rest of the text is more readily apparent, for it discusses the fear associated with promises, a fear that will be present in the only promises that are discussed in the essay, those involving some form of debt relationship (2.4-7, 8-11, 19-20, 21-22). Additionally, the discussion of the "blood and horror" involved in the developmental process leading up to the ability to make promises parallels the "terrible tyranny" described to bring about the original, *premoral* bad conscience (2.16-18), a

[14] There will not be an overview at the start of every chapter. In most cases, I will make clear within the commentary on the sections how the sections relate to each other. I include this overview because of the likely confusion over the odd nature of these particular sections as related to the rest of the text.

process that is also said to bring about the reliance on reason and the depreciation of the instincts. Nietzsche does not discuss the interaction of promises and the bad conscience, but the relationship of section 3 to 16-18 allows for an interpretation of the connection (chapter 7), an interpretation that will provide a useful contrast between the various forms of bad conscience described in the essay (chapter 10, 12).

As for the "paradoxical task" described in sections 1 and 2, its connection to the rest of the essay will only be made clear in the final three sections, which, like the first three, stand apart from the rest of the essay in that most of the essay focuses on the oppressed and enslaved, as well as the psychic developments that occurred in them. It is only in these final sections that Nietzsche presents the higher, nobler possibilities of man that have been made possible by the 'preparatory task.'

-1-

. Nietzsche opens the essay by stating a problem, that of 'breeding' an animal "that *is entitled to make promises*." This introduces the major task of the essay: presenting the processes by which this problem was solved (or, rather, to the "high degree" that it has been solved) and discussing the resultant changes that occurred in this animal, man. The scope of this problem is far larger than it at first appears, for this animal is not only *able* to make promises, but moreover it is *entitled* to do so.[15] A full understanding of this entitlement can only be made in light of Nietzsche's teaching on the bad conscience. As such, this issue will have to be readdressed towards the end of this interpretive essay. However, for the moment it can be noted that in the next section, Nietzsche describes the noble type of man that has such an entitlement: the Sovereign Individual, the possessor of a very particular form of conscience.

This is not the only complication on this question of 'breeding,' for Nietzsche expands on the problem with two questions. The first asks if this is not "the paradoxical task nature has set itself in the case of man," revealing that this is a natural process, although paradoxical given what it must overcome (the "strong health" discussed below), and it is phrased as a purposive, *teleological* process, a notion that will become increasingly problematic (cf. 2.12). The second question is whether this is not "the true problem *of* man." Perhaps it is a reiteration of nature's task, now an effort for man himself to carry out. Or it could be that this is the process that must be explained for an understanding of the full possibilities of mankind – for as stated, it is only in the Sovereign Individual that this task is completed. That is, it is the higher, nobler qualities that are the "true problem *of* man," the question being how these could emerge from the original, animal qualities.

The remainder of the section discusses what needed to be overcome in this 'breeding' task. The animal that is entitled to make promises must have overcome the opposing force of forgetfulness. This forgetfulness is not some psychical inertia or

[15] "das *versprechen darf*"- "*Darf*" (from *Dürfen*) simply means 'may' or 'allowed to'. To emphasize that this is more than an ability, something the animal can (kann) do, I follow Douglas Smith's [Oxford] translation of 'entitlement.' Kaufman's choice of 'right' has the virtue of hinting at the connection to an idea of natural right, but it is misleading given the importance of the actual use of right (*Recht*) in the essay. The Clark and Swensen translation that I usually rely on has it as an animal who is "permitted" to promise, but this sounds too dependent on another person.

dissipation but rather an *active*, repressing force that keeps most experience outside of explicit awareness, so that the mind can operate in an undisturbed manner, guiding the person with little need for *conscious* thought. The distinction between active and reactive (or passive) will become important later on (cf. 2.11), but put generally for the moment, the "active" entails some internal force overpowering opposing forces. In this human animal, there is the capacity for memory and conscious thought, but whatever inclinations there are towards this, these are weak, overpowered by more immediate drives and inclinations; as Nietzsche puts it in section 3, these men are "slaves of momentary affect and desire." Nietzsche's use of the term 'breeding' is misleading, in that he will not discuss physiological changes, such as the development of memory mechanisms; rather, this 'human-animal' must learn to exercise and strengthen its will if it is to overcome its innate forgetfulness.

The role of this forgetfulness needs to be appreciated, however, for while it is dominant in the original 'human-animal' it is important even in modern man, being necessary for healthy, well-functioning life. Forgetfulness is beneficial because present life could always be interrupted by past memories. In the most obvious case, there are many painful, sad, or disheartening memories that could forever be entering consciousness, making a person constantly miserable. As Nietzsche points out, "there could be no happiness, no cheerfulness, no hope, no pride, no *present* without forgetfulness" (2.1). This applies to all memories, even pleasant ones, however, as they could intrude and distract a person from present experience and present tasks – such distraction could be deadly in man's original environment where he had to rely on his natural instincts (cf. 2.16). Forgetfulness suppresses memories, keeping the mind clear, ready to operate in the present. In this way, forgetfulness maintains "proper psychic order." In more advanced men, this serves a higher purpose, clearing room for "nobler functions and functionaries, for ruling, foreseeing, predetermining." In primitive men, the proper psychic order is the natural operation of the instincts, and forgetfulness is required to suppress memories of past experience, as these would hinder the efficient operation of these instincts. For this reason, Nietzsche identifies original man as a "necessarily forgetful animal" in whom this forgetfulness represents a "form of *strong* health" (2.1).

Forgetfulness must be overcome, however, if man is to become 'entitled to make promises.' If this "necessarily forgetful animal" were made to give a promise, the words would be meaningless. They would quickly be forgotten in favor of more immediate benefits and more immediate inclinations. For the promise to be fulfilled, the memory of making the promise must remain, despite its inconvenience, and the will to fulfill it must also continue. In the one 'entitled to make promises,' this is accomplished by an opposing force, a type of memory that is also identified as an *active* force. This *active* memory ("a true *memory of the will*") is based on a strong will committed to carrying out some task; it is continually reasserting itself, a "long chain of will" that remains unbroken by the desires that continually try to overcome the will in an attempt to make the person forget the commitment and instead pursue more immediate ends. As will be discussed in the next section, the 'entitlement to promise' is dependent on this active type of will, a "protracted and unbreakable will" (2.2).

All of this presupposes that man is already capable of making promises, but a great deal must have first be achieved in the 'human-animal' for such a capacity. Before nature's "paradoxical task" can be fulfilled, a 'preparatory task' must first be carried out. Part of this task entails the development of the rational capacities. Man must learn to distinguish accident from cause so that he is conscious of what he can bring about. He must also learn to anticipate the future such that he can imagine the desired effect, commit himself to it and pursue the means causing that effect. A related part of the preparatory task towards this active memory is presented as altering man's understanding of himself and others: for men to make promises with each other, they must become similar to each other ("uniform, like among like" 2.2) as well as consistent and predictable ("*calculable, regular, necessary*" 2.1); each must see the other in this way and "in his own image of himself as well." The uniformity seems to be that there must be similar expectations: despite the different opportunities or different inclinations, each individual is expected to follow similar course of conduct. The consistency and predictability seems to be required so that, should a promise be made with another, the connection will be seen between the present and future, where both individuals are seen to be obliged at the later time and can be expected to fulfill the promise and demand that it be fulfilled.

The question of how all of these capacities emerged in animal life is mysterious indeed, but Nietzsche is not pursuing a question of evolutionary biology[16] – the developments described in the essay do not represent an "organic growing" (2.17) and as such, man could always return to his prehistoric state (2.9) were he not raised with the cultivating influences of his social environment. Nietzsche's discussion is based on his knowledge of human psychology, identifying what he sees as innate in man (such as the underlying passions and capacities; "the basic text *homo natura*"; BGE 230), and speculating as to how this basic nature would manifest itself in man's original environment. This 'human-animal' has all the innate capacities of modern humans, but in its natural environment, it simply relies on instincts (2.16). The rational capacities are used only unconsciously and thus never develop beyond a primitive level.[17] Man must be *forced* to learn to rely on consciousness and his rational capacities, using them in new ways. Likewise, he must be *forced* to develop his will power such that he can overcome his innate forgetfulness. This is the "paradoxical task nature has set before itself": there must be a *natural* impetus that forces man to overcome this dominant inclination of forgetfulness, an inclination whose dominance constitutes the natural "form of *strong* health" – in suspending this healthiness, man becomes conscious but also conflicted, no longer having an harmonious animal soul. This process is a genuine advancement (leading man to finally become "an interesting animal"; 1.7), but it introduces *sickness* into man: the bad conscience that will be discussed in section 16 onward.

The overcoming of this forgetfulness will not involve the active form of memory just discussed, but rather a form that Nietzsche contrasts it with: a passive memory,

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[16] Nor would he necessarily answer such a question with Darwinian principles since these focus on *reactive* forces, on adaptations rather than the active forces that necessitate the adaptation (cf. 2.12).

[17] While Rousseau offers different innate features of man in his *Second Discourse*, he too engages in this speculative 'paleo-psychology.' Rousseau begins at a point after all the changes humans may have undergone in emerging from their animal origins: "without taking into account the changes that must have occurred in man's internal and external conformation … I shall assume him always conformed as I see him today…" (Second Discourse, 1.1). Rousseau begins with this picture of natural man: "By stripping this Being, so constituted, of all the supernatural gifts he may have received, and of all the artificial faculties he could only have acquired by prolonged progress; by considering him, in a word, such as he must have issued from the hands of Nature …" (1.2). In Rousseau's discussion of this original condition, most of man's capacities supposedly remain completely unutilized, existing only in potential (e.g. language; note X.5). However, these develop over time, due to an inherent "faculty of perfecting oneself; a faculty which, with the aid of circumstances, successively develops all the others" (1.15). However, as Nietzsche also notes, through accidents, man, as an individual or as a species, could always return to the earlier, primitive state, losing "all that his *perfectibility* had made him acquire."

which is not a continually willing but rather something that forgetfulness cannot overcome. It is a "passive no-longer-being-able-to-get-rid-of the impression once it has been inscribed"[18] This type of memory (a "burned in" impression) will be the focus of much of the 2nd essay of the *Genealogy*; this memory and the natural impetus to it are discussed in section 2.3 as well as in 2.17. Indeed, the focus of most of the rest of the essay bears in one way or another more on the 'preparatory task' and on the 'sickness' that emerged from it rather than on the actual fulfillment of the "paradoxical task" of nature. It is only in the next section that Nietzsche directly speaks of the completed end; the rest of the essay will be in contrast to this "Sovereign Individual" except for the final sections (2.23-25).

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The "paradoxical task" of section one thus first requires a long 'preparatory task' by which the animal makes its necessary advances. Nietzsche delays the discussion of this process but he gives some indication of it by referring to the "tremendous labor" carried out by the "ethic of custom,"[19] which, as he discussed in *Daybreak*, amounts to obedience to whatever tradition demands, regardless of how ridiculous it may be. Driven by superstition and fear of the gods or ancestor-spirits (cf. 2.19), the members of the community pursued and enforced their customs; this ethic, taken by itself, would be condemned for its "severity, tyranny, stupidity, and idiocy." It is justified, however, by what it accomplished: "with the aid of the ethic of custom and the social straitjacket, man was actually *made* calculable."[20] Nietzsche will expand on the details of all of this "severity, tyranny, stupidity, and idiocy" in the next section as well as in his discussion of the origins of the bad conscience (2.16, 17). For the rest of the current section, however,

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[18] ("*ein passivisches Nicht-wieder-los-werden-können*") as opposed to the active memory, a "active no-longer-wanting-to-get-rid-of, a willing on and on of something one has once willed" ("*ein aktives Nicht-wieder-los-werden-wollen, ein Fort- und Fortwollen*").

[19] The German word is *Sittlichkeit*, not morality (Moral). Most translators keep this as morality, as 'ethic' doesn't have the same encompassing meaning in English. However, Nietzsche treats this 'ethic' as justifiable whereas he seems to condemn 'morality.' As such, it seems prudent to keep the terms separate.

[20] This is a curious justification of the process that it is later revealed to be a blind process that accidentally leads to the possibility of this end result (cf. 2.16: man as the "most unexpected and exciting lucky throws"). This post-facto form of justification will itself be justified in terms of Nietzsche's later discussion of "meaning" and purpose being fluid (that is, they are something that are imposed and perhaps further altered or reinterpreted at later points).

Nietzsche jumps to the end of the "tremendous process," discussing the final product in explicitly teleological terms: history is likened to a tree that has at last born its fruit, that which society and its ethic of custom were merely the means to – "the *sovereign individual*."[21]

This sovereign man is the completion of nature's paradoxical task, possessing the *active* memory (an "independent, protracted will") that enables him to overcome his more immediate desires and actively commit to some future end (continually "willing on and on" towards that end; 2.1). The remainder of the section describes the formal aspects of the sovereign man's nature (a more substantial discussion is precluded, since each of these men is unique, said to be "like only to himself"). The most prevalent feature is the character of his will: he is the "master of a *free* will"[22] and he possesses a "protracted and unbreakable will." The "entitlement to make promises" presented in section 1 is based on this active will, on the strength and reliability involved in this "protracted and unbreakable will" required to maintain one's word. One lacking such an entitlement would be motivated only in response to some external stimulus, be it a reward or ever-present threat; in the 'ethic of custom,' the motivation is based on a fear of the gods (and the rest of community who will try to appease the gods' anger). In these cases, the will need not be continuous or strong; the person is simply acting according to desires engendered by external sources (in 2.11, Nietzsche identifies these as "reactive affects"). Were the potential threat or reward removed, or if the person could break the promise unnoticed, he would readily do so. The stimulus is what is relevant; any promise given would be meaningless by itself. To put this all in conventional terms, one has the 'right' to make a promise if one can and will actually *keep* it without the need for external prompting.

Rather than being engendered by an external source, this active will is based on an inherent strength. The question arises, however, as to what the actual motivation is for such a prolonged will. Why would this sovereign individual maintain his commitment in the face of other external opportunities or consequences? This sovereign individual is

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[21] *Souveraine Individuum.* I am unsure why Nietzsche uses these particular words, but it should be noted that Nietzsche uses the French (*Souveraine*) rather than the German (*Souverän*). Also, while '*Individuum*' is German, it is also a Latin term used in scholastic philosophy to designate that which cannot be divided without destroying its essence (cf. HH 57).

[22] What Nietzsche means by 'free will' shall be discussed in chapter 12.

said to be "supraethical and autonomous"; his "free" and "independent" will is not motivated by rules and standards given by some external authority. Instead, Nietzsche suggests that the sovereign individual is motivated by a distinctive form of pride: a "proud knowledge of the extraordinary privilege of *responsibility*, the consciousness of this rare freedom, this power over oneself and over fate." Related to this is his "proud consciousness, twitching in all his muscles, of *what* has finally been achieved and become flesh in him, a true consciousness of power and freedom, a feeling of completion of man himself." This pride is said to have "sunk into his lowest depth," *becoming* the dominant instinct in him. Were the sovereign individual to name this dominant instinct, he would call it "his *conscience*...". Nietzsche ends the section with the ellipsis. Encapsulating the nature of the fulfillment of nature's "paradoxical task," this conscience is treated as a monumental achievement; indeed, in the next section, Nietzsche goes on to claim that this is the highest manifestation of conscience, one precluded by a "long history and metamorphosis" (2.3).

Nietzsche is being deliberately ambiguous here,[23] presenting an image of a fulfillment of nature and "completion of man," describing him only in formal terms. Appreciating what he means by this sovereign individual requires first understanding this "long history and metamorphosis" of conscience; as such, a discussion of the full character of this sovereign individual will have to be returned to towards the end of this interpretive essay (cf. Chapter 11).

For the moment, however, there are a few other aspects of the present description that at least hint at the character of the sovereign individual. One source of the ambiguity in this section is that Nietzsche gives no indication as to the direction of this active will: what is it that the sovereign individual wills and promises? It is not difficult to imagine someone with enough pride to keep his promise to, say, pay back a small loan. Such an active, prolonged will is certainly an advance over other animals, but it does not seem to deserve such grandiose terms as a "master of a free will" who possesses mastery over circumstances and nature, power over himself and fate. It may be that there are various conceivable degrees of this sovereign character. That said, concerns with honor or pride –

[23] Recall EH.B.GM: "Every time a beginning is *calculated* to lead one astray, cool, scientific, even ironic, deliberately foreground, deliberately holding out."

let alone even something as meager as an active willingness to pay back debts – is curiously absent in the rest of the essay, where the men described are motivated only by fear of punishment. The only indication of a different form of character is the masters or nobles that are occasionally mentioned but never described (2.3,5,8,11,17,20). There are some indications of a political nature of the sovereign individual in the present description; indeed, the term "sovereign" itself suggests a political ruler (particularly in the social contract tradition). In varying degrees of complexity, these masters impose new rules and settlements on those under their power (cf. 2.3,17 vs. 2.8, 11); being 'legislators,' they are at least relatively "supraethical" in that they bring about new modes and orders. Part of the power of these masters may come from their prolonged will, for with it they could organize together and carry out extended projects ("mastery over oneself also necessarily brings with it mastery … over all lesser-willed and unreliable creatures").[24] Another indication of the sovereign individual being a master or noble type is the description of his proud knowledge and consciousness, as well as his using himself as a "*standard of value*." This corresponds with the noble mode of valuation described in the first essay, a "triumphant yes-saying" and affirmation of oneself (1.10); likewise, the sovereign individual, because of his freedom and entitlement to make promises, is said to be "*entitled to say 'yes'* to [himself] too" (2.3).

All of this said, the masters and nobles discussed do not seem to embody the full character of this sovereign individual. In the first essay, the nobles were described as being quite primitive, even forgetful (1.11), and Nietzsche even refers to them as "beasts of prey" (1.12), as he does later in the second essay (2.17). These masters, the original nobles (cf. 2.20), may be relatively more advanced than those under them, but they do not represent the pinnacle of the development of man as described in this section; they remain imprudent, not fully relying on their reason or consciousness (2.16), and they do not seem to have the foresight (the "command over the future in advance"; 2.1) to be said to have "mastery over nature" or "power over fate" (2.2).

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[24] Nietzsche says that the sovereign individual can trust others like him who have a strong, reliable will. In relation to less-willed people, this sovereign keeps his foot ready to kick those who promise without the entitlement (those who require motivating threats), and a "rod" to beat liars who break their word once they give it. In later sections, the masters are described as bringing about the development of those under their power. Nietzsche's unusual choice of words for "rod" (or switch) hints at this: *Zuchtrute*, combining *Rute* (rod) with *Zucht* (to breed, discipline) – e.g. BGE 188: the benefit of slavery of any form for "spiritual discipline and breeding" (*geistigen Zucht und Züchtung*).

Nietzsche seems to have a fuller manifestation of this sovereign individual in mind, but what this is will not be hinted at until the final sections of the essay. For now it will merely be noted that there is the possibility of partial manifestations, of individuals possessing some form of active will and motivated by pride; but as stated, the discussion of these men will be curiously absent from the rest of the essay. Instead, Nietzsche will focus on those who are dominated by others; it is in them that many of the psychic developments of relevance to the essay will occur. The first such development discussed is a type of memory necessary for keeping promises, even if only under duress. This forced development is discussed in the next section.

-3-

Nietzsche opens the section with some final words on the sovereign individual's conscience: it is the highest form of conscience, reached only after a "long history and metamorphosis" of previous forms of conscience. He again describes this "paradoxical task" of breeding an animal "entitled to make promises" as a teleological task: "everything on the tree [of history] was in the process of growing towards it!" – but he concludes this final description of the sovereign individual (the 'animal' entitled to promise) with a dash, returning to the forgetful animal of section one. The start of section 2 presented one aspect of the 'preparatory task,' the "ethic of custom and the social straitjacket" making man calculable and predictable; in this section, Nietzsche describes how man was made to carry out promises and develop his rational capacities: it was through the imposition of memory. This is not the "active memory" associated with the sovereign individual, which was described as a prolonged will, one that opposes more immediate inclinations in order to carry out something one earlier desired.[25] The type of memory described here is a passive type, something that cannot be forgotten[26] – this memory is 'burned in' by means of brutal punishments.[27]

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[25] "an active no-longer-wanting-to-get-rid-of"; 2.1.

[26] "a passive no-longer-being-able-to-get-rid-of the impression once it has been inscribed... indigestion from a once-pledged word over which one cannot regain control"; 2.1.

[27] Nietzsche says that "Whenever man considered it necessary to make a memory for himself it was never done without blood, torment, sacrifice..." and goes on to speak of such things as mutilation and even castration being used to make memories. While these would certainly be a more salient reminder than tying a string around one's finger, I assume Nietzsche is speaking of man in general, with some men imposing memories on others through these vicious practices.

It is unclear who is carrying out these punishments, whether it is some group of primitive masters punishing their slaves (2.17) or the community itself policing its members (2.9,10); Nietzsche seems to be speaking abstractly, for some of the description sounds most primitive, such as an instinct in primeval men that "intuited in pain the most powerful aid to mnemonics," whereas later in the section he speaks of penal codes as late as the fifteenth century. The major point is that punishment (and the threat of it) has served as a socializing force throughout history, making man conform himself to the rules and demands of the community ("a few primitive requirements of social coexistence"). Most immediately, man must learn to resist his natural instincts and inclinations; only once he can fulfill the basic promises to forgo these inclinations (certain 'I will nots') will he be able to enjoy the advantages of society (such as protection of undeserved violence from outsiders; 2.9).

The major developments that come from this socialization (or 'taming' of man; 2.7, 1.11) is firstly the development of reason. Because of these punishments, man is afraid to act on his natural instincts; he is thus forced to rely on his rational capacities, (cf. 2.15-17). Through such means, man developed his "reason, seriousness, mastery over the affects, this entire gloomy matter called reflection," and Nietzsche emphasizes how this "blood and horror" has been necessary for these developments that we esteem.[28] The second advancement is the 'gloominess' and solemnity now associated with promises because of the fear associated with breaking them. Being able to give promises and keep them (even if only because afraid of the consequences), man can enter more complicated relationships. One such relationship, the debtor-creditor relationship and its various permutations, is the focus of many of the remaining sections of the second essay.

Many of the events mentioned in this section will be revisited in subsequent sections, such as the development of reason and the ability to carry out a promise. While this section in some ways outlines many of the others, most directly it runs parallel to the

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[28] Nietzsche seems to want to emphasize the cruelty and violence of punishment, showing how these ugly processes can lead to advancements in man and thus show that they are not simply 'bad-in-themselves.' Like the tyranny (&c) of the 'ethic of custom and the social straitjacket', all of this "blood and horror" of these punishments is justified by the end they result in.

Nietzsche does not emphasize that the advantages of society would also be a socializing force, encouraging people to obey the rules such that they do not lose those advantages... but pain being a much more immediately motivating force, punishment might be the necessary first step to teaching what is forbidden.

discussion of 2.17. There, however, there is no pretension of the development being a deliberate project; rather, it is an incidental effect of the cruelty of the 'beast of prey' masters (cf. 2.15). Another important difference is that 2.17 is in the midst of the discussion of the origin of the bad conscience, whereas here Nietzsche is just presenting the most general developments of these punishments. There will be further discussion on punishment itself later on (cf. 2.11,13); this socialization is not the only purpose that punishment serves, but it is the most important at this stage in the essay, providing a basis for discussing the promises of the debt relationships that are the focus of the next sections.

Nietzsche opens with the question, "But how did that other 'gloomy thing,' the consciousness of guilt, the entire 'bad conscience' come into the world?" This question seems to come from nowhere; the previous section opened with reference to the highest form of conscience, which Nietzsche claims was preceded by a "long history and metamorphosis." But rather than describing any of these previous forms of conscience, he moved on to a discussion of the development of a memory for the rules of the community, of what is deemed forbidden. It is not obvious at this point in the essay, but as stated, much of section 3 parallels the account of section 17, and this 'gloomy' form of memory corresponds to an early, *premoral* form of the bad conscience discussed there (in the next section, Nietzsche will briefly make note of an early form of conscience). In the current section, however, the 'bad conscience' that Nietzsche asks about is the "merely 'modern' experience" of bad conscience. This *moral* bad conscience (as I will call it for the sake of clarity) is experienced as being equivalent to a consciousness of guilt. However, the previous, premoral forms of bad conscience had nothing to do with guilt (cf. 2.14); indeed, the idea of guilt itself is an historic development, Nietzsche claims, a development that is preceded by premoral forms. In order to understand the history of the moral bad conscience, one must also understand the history of the moral concept of guilt. Nietzsche first addresses this latter question of guilt, discussing its premoral forms in this and the following sections; only later in the essay will he return explicitly to discuss the original bad conscience (cf. 2.16 ff; Chapter 6) and its eventual "metamorphosis" (or 'moralization') into the moral bad conscience, the consciousness of guilt (cf. 2.21ff; Chapter 9,10).

The rest of the section is spent on two claims that Nietzsche makes on the history of guilt. The first is his overall hypothesis on the origins of guilt: "the central moral concept 'guilt' [*Schuld*] had its origins in the very material concept 'debt' [*Schulden*]." At this point, Nietzsche offers no justification for this claim, but much of the later sections of the essay deal with the question of how debt became moralized into guilt.[29] The second

[29] For the moment, Nietzsche seems to rely solely on the similarity between the German words. In this way, he is offering an illustration of the question he posed at the end of the first essay: "*What light does*

historical claim that Nietzsche makes is that the practice of punishment as requital evolved independently of any distinction made based on an idea of intentionality; previously there was no notion of freedom or unfreedom of the will. In the contemporary world, the rationale behind punishment is: "'the criminal has earned his punishment *because* he could have acted otherwise.'" That the criminal chose to act in that way makes him responsible for his actions, and he is deemed *guilty*. This was not always the case, according to Nietzsche; previously, punishment had nothing to do with this idea of guilt (cf. 2.14).[30] Rather, for most of human history, people were punished as a reaction based on anger over an injury suffered. This anger is vented on the identified agent of the injury with regard only to the consequence not the intent behind the action. The severity of the punishment is not dependent on the magnitude of the injury itself, but rather on the anger of the injured one.[31]

At some point in history (2.8), there was a significant transformation of this early form of punishment: the anger was moderated and modified by *an idea*, one that holds that every injury has a specific equivalent worth and it can be repaid by something of equivalent value. Of most significance for the coming sections is that this equivalence might consist of an equivalent amount of *pain* being inflicted back on the agent of the injury. The severity of the punishment is no longer dependent on the anger of the victim, but on a fixed idea of the worth of the injury. The power of this idea (of 'proportionality,' as we would say) comes from the economic relationship between creditor and debtor.

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*linguistics, and especially the study of etymology, throw on the history of the evolution of moral concepts?*" (1.17). The etymology Nietzsche outlined here *may* provide insight into the experience of earlier men; if they used similar-sounding words for different concepts, they may have indeed seen those concepts as similar or even the same. In this case, the German words for debt and guilt happen to be the same. Notwithstanding all the other languages lacking this connection, that some earlier people supposedly noticed a connection provides justification (albeit tenuous) for the *conjecture* of the relationship between guilt and debt. In the latter parts of the essay, Nietzsche offers justification for this initial conjecture, explaining how it is that the concept debt could become moralized into the concept of guilt.

[30] As an example of this, one might think of Oedipus. He (and all of Thebes) was condemned by the gods because of the *consequences* of his actions, his fratricide and incest. Oedipus had no knowledge of having done this; indeed, he consciously did everything he could to avoid this prophesied fate. (Cf. BGE 32: Nietzsche makes a distinction between premoral and moral eras, where the premoral is concerned with consequences and the moral with conscious intentions).

[31] Nietzsche only speaks of this reaction to injury as anger in this section, but the description matches that of revenge, the "reactive affect" that will be discussed in section 2.11 in relation to punishment. Vengeance is the original impetus behind "punishment as requital" – but as will be discussed later, Nietzsche also sees the idea of free will and guiltiness, along with their connection to 'deserved' punishment, as also being fundamentally motivated by the spirit of revenge (1.13; chapter 9).

With this claim, Nietzsche offers some indication as to how guilt emerged from debt: in this basic form of the debtor-creditor relationship, the idea of debt becomes associated with the idea of punishment. In the next section, Nietzsche will describe the basic form of the debtor-creditor relationship and how it was that the idea of debt and credit are used to moderate anger and punishment. In later sections, he will describe how the economic concept of indebtedness (and its relationship to punishment) grew beyond economic concerns, being transferred to legal, social and religious realms. It is among these forms of 'debt-relationship' that the moral idea of guilt (and its relationship to deserved punishment) will emerge (cf. 2.19ff.).

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Nietzsche describes the early economic relationship between debtor and creditor by relating it back to his discussion of promises in section three. As in that section, there is a great deal of "severity, cruelty and pain" associated with these economic promises: the debtor promises that should he fail to repay, he will substitute something else that he possesses, something equivalent to the debt. This could be his property, his wife, his freedom, but most significantly, the creditor could be repaid by being permitted to inflict any indignity or torture upon the debtor, such as cutting off an amount of flesh deemed equivalent to the debt.[32] This morbid practice would undoubtedly be shocking to modern readers, but its previous existence cannot be denied, as Nietzsche points to the universal character of such practices in early men: "everywhere and early on there were exact assessments of value developed from this viewpoint—some going horribly into the smallest detail." [33]

[32] The idea of measure for measure in the Old Testament, for example: "...if any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe" (Exodus 21:23-5). At the mention of cutting off flesh from another, we might think of Shylock in the *Merchant of Venice*, but this may just be a coincidence because it was an historical practice and Nietzsche's sourcebook of all the forms of punishment in 2.4 included such an example (cf. footnote 38:36 in Clark and Swensen translation, p. 142).

[33] Among these table of values is that of the Romans, which declared that it would be no crime to take more or less than what was deemed equivalent to the debt or injury. Nietzsche speaks of this as a great progress, a "proof of a freer, more grandly calculating, *more Roman* conception of the law." What is meant by this being 'progress' is unclear here, but based on Nietzsche's criticism in 2.11 of absolute law constraining the 'will of life,' it seems his praise is that the Roman law allows for the freedom to have conflict and strife.

The motivation for the debtor making this promise is in part to gain the trust of the creditor, so that he believes he will be repaid and so will grant the debt. What is of greater importance to the essay, however, is that the debtor is said to make this promise in order to "impress repayment as a duty, an obligation upon his conscience." This early conscience is mentioned only in passing, but there is no indication that there is a moral concern related to this promise. Rather, as noted, it seems more similar to the "severity, cruelty and pain" of the promises described in section 3, promises that could not be forgotten because of their association with fearful consequences. This conscience mentioned here is not a consciousness of guilt, but rather a temporary consciousness of *debt*: the 'duty' and 'obligation' mentioned amount only to a continuing awareness of the debt and a desire to repay it in order to avoid the fearful consequences of forgetting. This mention of a premoral conscience will be important in understanding the relation of these early sections of the essay to the later sections when Nietzsche presents his hypothesis on the origin of the bad conscience (2.16ff; cf. Chapter 7).

To return to the discussion, however, Nietzsche brings up the historical existence of tables establishing fixed values for various parts, values that were used to determine equivalent compensation for injuries suffered (including the losses entailed in unpaid debts). Nietzsche now offers an interpretation as to the "logic of this whole form of compensation." It is easy enough to understand one accepting other possessions for an unpaid debt, and even such material compensation for personal injuries – but how would torture and cutting the flesh from the injurer serve as compensation for a debt or injury? The answer that Nietzsche gives is that the compensation comes from the satisfaction of cruelty. This is not just the pleasure of doing violence (though that is a part of it), but also the pleasure of having power over someone, "of being entitled to vent [one's] power without a second thought on one who is powerless." Nietzsche does not justify this claim until the next section (where he will also mention why this compensation is not *merely* a matter of the 'payback' of revenge). Instead, he adds a qualification that the satisfaction here is relative to social rank: the "lower and baser" the creditor's standing in the social order, the higher will he value this opportunity to be cruel. In venting his power and

'punishing' the debtor, the creditor "participates in a *right of the masters*";[34] he even gets to feel like a master with this "foretaste of a higher status."

Nietzsche does not discuss the character of these masters (or lords – *Herren*), but based on this inverse relationship, it would seem that they would not consider it great repayment to have this opportunity to be cruel. This is because they already have power: perhaps they engage in this satisfaction of venting their power by being cruel on those under them without the need for an excuse,[35] but it might also be that they are satisfied in exercising and gaining power in other ways – though what this might consist of is difficult to say, because while Nietzsche will mention these masters again, he offers little by way of description of them. His focus, instead, is on the powerless, those dominated by masters or perhaps even of a lowly status in later society. As described in section 3, these men are forced to forego their natural inclinations, one of which, it seems, is the desire to be cruel (cf. 2.16); this is one of the 'I will nots' he must promise in order to enjoy the advantages of society. Normally, should he break this rule and engage in this forbidden 'right of the masters,' he will be punished. However, in the case of a broken debt or injury, he is granted a special "entitlement" from the masters, "a warrant for and right to cruelty." His long pent up and repressed cruelty can be finally be released: "At last, he too may experience for once the exalted sensation of being entitled to despise and mistreat someone as 'beneath him.'"[36] In later communities, the power and execution of punishment is passed over to the 'authorities,' in which case this lowly person will gain satisfaction of at least seeing that other person suffer.[37]

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[34] Nietzsche puts 'punishing' in quotation marks for we would understand this action as punishment, but for the creditor, it is seen as an opportunity to enjoy a pleasure that has long been denied him (cf. 2.13).

[35] While these masters might have a 'right' to be cruel, one would think that there would at least be some distinctions made, some way of picking a target for cruelty. It is difficult to say given that there is no description of these masters, but as will be discussed in 2.9, there does seem to be some friend-enemy distinction.

[36] This is not to say that he actually has any real power; he needs special permission from those with power, and presumably should the debtor resist, he will be forced to submit by the masters. Nietzsche seems to be suggesting that a large part of the pleasure in "punishment as requital" (2.4) is slavish; it is only because of the slave's impotence that he enjoys this punishment (making or seeing-suffer) so much. The masters might enjoy punishment based on their inclination to cruelty (cf. 2.6), but they would not be dependent on punishment as their only satisfaction of this desire.

[37] NB: Nietzsche does *not* say 'masters' here; these 'authorities' of the later community are something like police: they have some special rights in their role, but this is authorized by the community members with whom they are otherwise equal.

Of course, the question arises as to why the masters would grant this entitlement, or allowing cruelty, why would they care that the punishment be equivalent to the injury? This will partially be answered in section 2.11, where Nietzsche begins a discussion of the purpose of punishment in a community. In the next two sections, Nietzsche offers a defense for this claim that there is a real pleasure in cruelty, a claim that is alien and even revolting to "merely 'modern' experience" (2.4).

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Nietzsche opens the section by reintroducing his claim that the moral concepts such as guilt, conscience,[38] duty and sacredness of duty emerged from the economic concept of debt. He does not yet discuss how this transformation came about, other than that this moral world emerged from all of the cruelty and blood that came to be associated with unpaid debts and broken promises. Nietzsche speaks of this as a "perhaps now inextricable meshing of the ideas 'debt and suffering.'" This 'meshing' will carry over to the idea of guilt being associated with punishment (cf. Chapter 10). Nietzsche again describes his "conjecture," that in exchange for the loss and displeasure over the loss, the creditor was repaid by the "extraordinary counter-pleasure" of "*making*-suffer." In this section, however, he adds that the reader should not see this 'payback' as a matter of revenge: such an answer obscures the issue rather than making it easier to see. This is not to say, however, that revenge is not a factor here at all; indeed, much of the first essay described how powerful the desire for revenge can become (there too, the discussion of the particular pleasure focused on slaves and the powerless). Revenge does entail a pleasure in making one's injurer suffer, but this is what Nietzsche later refers to as a "reactive affect" (2.11): it only comes into being after some external stimulus (being injured). This pleasure is only a specific instance of a more general pleasure in making-suffer, one that requires no provocation: this "disinterested malice" is the joy in cruelty, an "active affect" (2.11) of unprovoked aggression. Nietzsche's point seems to be that this active cruelty is also part of the pleasure in punishing or witnessing punishment, a pleasure that is overlooked if one merely identifies revenge as the whole of the

[38] As has been mentioned, Nietzsche is making a distinction between premoral and moral forms of conscience. In the last section he referred to such a conscience and he does again in this section, a conscience that readily 'says yes' to cruelty. The conscience he refers to here is a moral conscience.

compensation. This "festival pleasure" of open cruelty is in all men, but as previously pointed out, it is the slave or powerless one who overvalues the opportunity for this pleasure because he is otherwise repressed and unable to express his desire to be cruel. In section 2.11, Nietzsche will further discuss revenge, and discuss its relation to the idea of proportionality. For the remainder of the current section, however, Nietzsche defends the claim that there is a genuine pleasure in cruelty.

At the end of the section, Nietzsche sums up this psychological point: "seeing-suffer feels good, making-suffer even more so – that is a hard proposition, but a central one, an old, powerful, human-all-too-human proposition" (2.6). Much of the defense of this "human-all-too-human proposition" comes from pointing out how prevalent cruelty has been across human history, across so many cultures and different contexts.[39] War provides one of the most obvious examples, and in section nine, Nietzsche refers to the "*Vae Victis*" ('woe to the conquered!'), the great joy victors have had in their celebrations, torturing and humiliating captured enemies (be they soldiers or otherwise). Another example is within the community, where criminals have been exposed to all manner of cruel punishments. In section 3, Nietzsche gave a long list of such punishments: an amazing amount of creativity has been put into devising new methods of torture and punishment (e.g. "the evil-doer was smeared with honey and abandoned to the flies under a burning sun"). One would think that a few methods would suffice to cause pain or death; perhaps these get 'boring' or perhaps there is a cruel delight involved in developing these new methods. It is also important to note that these punishments have typically not been carried out in secluded chambers, but in the context of public festivals, as a spectacle enjoyed by all; man, woman and child. There are political reasons for these punishments, as will be discussed later (2.11,13), but the point here is the pleasure of the spectators. Religious ceremonies, likewise, have involved horrific spectacles of cruelty; mutilation and human (and later animal) sacrifice are a feature of most primitive religions

[39] Nietzsche goes further back in history, to man's evolutionary past. To his proposition that there is a great pleasure in seeing- or making-suffer, Nietzsche claims that "even apes might subscribe: for it is said that in thinking up bizarre cruelties they already abundantly herald, and, as it were, 'prelude' man" (2.6). Along with reminding readers of their natural origins, this undercuts claims that some might like to make about cruelty being something that has been (cruelly) 'socialized' into humans. This 'naturalist observation' is also in line with a theory of will to power – there is a joy to venting one's strength, to expending energy. Like the cat's pleasure in playing with its prey, this does not seem to be simply a matter of 'adaptive behavior' or survival, but rather, a genuine pleasure and enjoyment in expressing excess energy.

("all religious systems are in their deepest foundations systems of cruelties"; 2.3). In all of these examples, certainly, there are other emotions at work, but in each, Nietzsche is claiming open cruelty is an ingredient in these 'festivals of pleasure.'[40]

There are milder forms of this pleasure in suffering as well, whether it simply be seeing someone trip (*Schadenfreude*), or in engaging in malicious teasing or pranks that result in only minor injuries. Nietzsche refers to a series of chapters in *Don Quixote* where the gullible knight's chivalry is the subject of a series of cruel jokes by a Duke and Duchess. Whereas readers in Cervantes' time (early 1600s) were delighted by these tales; Nietzsche claims that overly moralized readers in his own time were anguished by Don Quixote's suffering;[41] even if this is true, it is likely that readers in today's less moral age would once again enjoy these stories.[42] It might be helpful to add some other contemporary examples to support Nietzsche's argument that there is pleasure in seeing suffering, as readers today should find it easier to at least recognize this pleasure given that our society tolerates much more open displays of cruelty than did Nietzsche's time. While it has not yet reached the immediacy of the spectacles of the Roman Coliseum, the joys of cruelty form the basis of the mass popularity of violence in modern entertainment. This ranges from relatively tame slapstick humor to bloodbaths in modern action films. Taking this beyond the more passive pleasure of 'seeing-suffer,' increasingly realistic video games provide an example of the joy in 'making-suffer,' offering the vicarious pleasure of interactive slaughtering, sometimes of aliens, sometimes of innocent pedestrians. Offering opportunities for the pleasure in cruelty is a very lucrative and a very certain industry: it clearly has a strong appeal to something deep within mankind.

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[40] This is not to say that there is no discrimination made in this pleasure in 'making-suffer.' As will be suggested in section 2.9, there is a distinction made between insiders and outsides, friends and enemies.

[41] The next section (2.7) will suggest why it is that Christians of the 1600s might still find Don Quixote funny, but the secular moralists of Nietzsche's time would be aghast. (Cf. GM p.5: "this preferential treatment and overestimation of compassion...").

[42] Or at least I assume so, but I will allow the reader to judge: the Duke and Duchess have servants dress up as devils, wizards and sages to convince Don Quixote to accept some ridiculous requests. For example, an evil 'Merlin' convinces him that in order to save a woman, his servant Sancho would have to willingly submit to be whipped 3300 times (only a few are actually administered). In another instance, some maids put on beards, saying they have been cursed by a wizard; to reverse the enchantment, Don Quixote and Sancho are convinced to be blindfolded and 'flown' on a wooden horse to defeat a giant; the court silently laughs while bellows are used to mimic the flight, and firecrackers are stuffed in the horse, making it explode before it 'lands.' In another instance, cats are stuffed through Don Quixote's window at night; thinking they were devils, he attacks them and has his face so scratched up ('like a sieve') that he is bed-ridden for five days.

Given all of this, it is difficult to deny honestly Nietzsche's point here, that there is a genuine human pleasure in cruelty.

Even if such instances are granted, however, perhaps they will be dismissed as barbarism. It will be argued that at least in civilized people, this savage, bestial pleasure has been overcome by modern culture and its ideals. Nietzsche offers an alternative interpretation of the seeming absence of cruelty in these 'civilized' cases: namely, that the pleasure of cruelty is still present but it takes a profounder eye to see it, for it is satisfied in much more refined ways. Referring to an argument he made in *BGE 229*, Nietzsche claims that there is an "ever-growing spiritualization and 'deification' of cruelty that runs through the entire history of higher culture (and in a significant sense even constitutes it)" (2.6). Much of the second essay is an illustration of this claim, presenting how widespread this 'spiritualization' can be.[43] In BGE 229, Nietzsche provides some examples of this refined cruelty, such as the pleasure taken from watching tragedies. Of even more interest, particularly for the second essay, are the "dangerous thrills of cruelty turned *against oneself*" (BGE 229): one can enjoy the 'festival pleasure' of cruelty by making oneself suffer. Nietzsche claims that in religious self-denial and the ascetic's desensualization, there is the pleasure of self-cruelty. Likewise, at the start of the current section (2.6), referring to "old Kant," Nietzsche suggests that morality itself involves this self-cruelty: "the categorical imperative reeks of cruelty...". The imperative,[44] based solely in reason, is supposed to be applied regardless of one's inclinations or personal ends. Nietzsche is suggesting that there must be some ulterior motive for suppressing all of one's desires, and in terms of this essay, it is the 'human, all-too-human' pleasure of self-cruelty. The suggestion will not be justified until Nietzsche discusses the bad conscience and explains the psychology of this self-cruelty (2.18). For the moment, however, these examples of an immoral pleasure being behind moral practices offers an anticipation of Nietzsche's later presentation of the role of cruelty in the origins of morality (cf. 2.22; Chapter 10). As to the scope of how far this

[43] In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche describes the second treatise of the *Genealogy* as a presentation of the undeniable inclusion of cruelty as an aspect of human nature, and of its importance to culture: "Cruelty is here exposed for the first time as one of the most ancient and basic substrata of culture that simply cannot be imagined away" (EH:B.GM).

[44] Kant gives several different formulations of the categorical imperative; the first is: "Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law." (Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals, 421: [Ellington, Hackett translation]).

cruelty can be spiritualized, that it can be 'deified' provides some indication; the relation of cruelty with the gods is touched on in section seven but will not fully be elaborated until near the end of the essay (2.19-23).

Nietzsche is keenly aware that modern man will find this discussion on cruelty repulsive – which is to say painful. However, this truth about human nature, as ugly as it might be, is not a license for despair over the human condition. In the next section, Nietzsche offers a point of clarification, one meant to counter such a pessimistic response.

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Nietzsche interrupts his discussion of the debt-relationship and cruelty to preempt a pessimistic interpretation of the discussion so far. Pessimists would accept Nietzsche's 'human, all-too-human proposition' on the pervasiveness of this 'festival pleasure' of cruelty throughout history, but they would exploit it in service of their own nihilistic arguments "*against* existence." They would dispute that there could be anything sublime about cruelty; it only points to all the suffering in man's existence, proving that life has been, and always will be, miserable. Nietzsche argues to the contrary: there has been suffering, great suffering, but past life was actually "lighthearted" because ancient men shared the "joy and innocence of the animal" in embracing cruelty. In this pleasure they found "a genuine seduction *to* life." This 'lightheartedness' has since disappeared because of the emergence of teachings that have brought about man's "morbid softening and moralization."[45] Nietzsche does not yet discuss the origin of these teachings and the subsequent moralization but instead focuses on their effects: these life-deniers and preachers of death (as Zarathustra calls them; Z 1.3,9) put forth fantastical ideas of a perfect *after*-life and perfect beings ("angels"), ideas that have undermined *real*-life,

[45] Moralization in German is *Moralisierung*, but here it is a translation of *Vermoralisierung*, a Nietzsche coinage. As Clark and Swensen [Hackett] explain, "The prefix *ver-* can add a number of different nuances to a verb stem; the most probably here are: *thoroughly moralize or wrongly moralize* (and hence spoil)." [Note 43.8, p. 143]

making man ashamed of himself, of all his instincts, and, in general, made man repulsed by life itself.

The absence of this weak pessimism was not solely from the innocence of the joy in cruelty, however; by itself, this pleasure could not make up for the suffering that men experienced from others and from 'fate.' What is also needed is a means of understanding suffering: suffering can be accepted, even embraced, as long as it is not seen as senseless, but rather as something having meaning or purpose (cf. 3.28). Despite the gloominess they might have about real life, Christians nevertheless have hope in the afterlife and can interpret worldly suffering as part of an "entire secret salvation machinery." Nietzsche will later focus on the opposite aspect of this 'secret machinery,' namely, on the prospect of eternal damnation and the terror it engenders. However, what this example of the Christian hope of salvation points to is that moralization does not necessarily entail pessimism.[46] The pessimism he is attacking is among those who are born in the aftermath of the death of God yet still cling to a Christian moralization against the worth of this life. Because these pessimists have no way of positively understanding human suffering, they condemn as inherently wrong anything that is cruel, anything that causes suffering.[47]

This desire to understand suffering can become quite powerful; Nietzsche says that this desire "almost compelled [men] back then to invent gods and intermediate beings of all heights and depths." Later in the essay, Nietzsche suggests an origin of spirits and gods (2.19), and while this 'compulsion' might not lead to the invention of these 'gods and beings,' it may lead to a reinterpretation of existing gods, such that the gods do offer an understanding of human suffering (cf. Chapter 10). The men of ancient times, for example, "knew how to interpret all suffering in terms of spectators or agents of suffering" – for them, there was no meaningless suffering, as they saw their gods as either amused spectators or the actual causers of their suffering (cf.2.23). This way of understanding suffering is not unconnected to the pleasure of cruelty: ancient men,

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[46] Though, as will be discussed later (Chapter 10), Nietzsche does claim that there is a necessary trajectory from morality (or at least the type of morality he is attacking) to secular morality and eventually to nihilistic pessimism (cf. 3.24).

[47] As such, compassion, the desire to prevent suffering in anyone, takes on an even greater value than before (cf. GM p.5). Christianity and other moralized religions (e.g. Buddhism) encourage compassion, but the believers of these faiths are not as indignant at suffering as are modern men. This may be why readers in Nietzsche's time would be anguished at Don Quixote, but in the 1600s they could enjoy the tales. The question remains as to why secular readers today would once again find violence funny.

affirming their own pleasure in cruelty, assumed their gods and other spirits also enjoyed cruelty. This, in turn, further justified their own cruelty, providing more opportunities to be cruel, such as through sacrifices and other gifts to the gods.

In the last section, Nietzsche spoke of the "spiritualization and 'deification'" of cruelty, and he again turns to this subject. Great creativity can emerge from cruelty, from the celebration of cruelty simply, as well as in the response to the suffering involved in it. Nietzsche attributes the tragedies of the Greek poets as such creations: beautiful tales of tragic horrors offered as "*festival games* for the gods" (as well as for other men who would appreciate such festivals). A more curious example is the efforts Nietzsche attributes to the moral philosophers of Greece. They imagined that the gods were interested in man's moral struggle, in "the heroism and self-torture of the virtuous." Such an image would likely inspire other men to pursue such virtue, no longer just for their own satisfaction, but also to please the gods or to avoid displeasing them. It was suggested in the last section that cruelty was involved in the self-denial involved in morality, and while this moral struggle and self-torture would also involve cruelty, there is no indication that this morality is akin to the rejection of life associated with the "moralization" mentioned above; here there are *human* desires, not just the demands of reason. This is the first indication, at least in this essay (cf. 1.10), that Nietzsche might not be attacking all forms of morality.

The creative efforts of these moral philosophers went further: they 'invented' the idea of free will, what Nietzsche treats as the "absolute spontaneity of man in good and evil." The purpose of this invention, Nietzsche suggests, was to, "above all else," create an idea that the gods' interest in man and in human virtue "*could never be exhausted.*" Nietzsche goes on to add that the philosophers, these "*friends of the gods*" had reason enough to invent this idea just so that the gods would never be bored by a deterministic world. I am uncertain at what Nietzsche is getting at with these motivations; this explanation of the origin of the idea of free will remains perplexing because of its sheer implausibility. However, in terms of the effect of this idea, it should be recalled that in section 2.4, Nietzsche claimed that the belief in free will (intentionality) is required for an idea of guiltiness: "'the criminal has earned his punishment *because* he could have acted otherwise'" (2.4). Nietzsche does not discuss the transformation of debt into guilt in this

section, but the inventions of these moral philosophers suggest another part of the moralization. The gods "imagined" by these philosophers are constantly watching man and, moreover, are concerned with human virtue (and not just, say, that one makes the proper sacrifices to the gods). In terms of unpaid debts and broken promises, the creditor might forget or be unable to respond, but the gods will notice the debtor's actions; a belief in such concerned spectators will contribute to the development of a more pervasive consciousness of man's debts and guilt. More will be said on these issues later, in the actual discussion of the moralization, as on how the idea of free will becomes involved in the moralization (Chapter 10; cf. 1.13).

The more immediate purpose of this section, however, is to counter a pessimistic response to Nietzsche's presentation of man's pleasure in cruelty. Nietzsche is attacking the "softening and moralization of man" because he sees such beliefs as ultimately pernicious to life. This form of morality leads man to reject his nature and ultimately leads to a nihilistic pessimism towards existence. As part of his attack, Nietzsche exploits the indignation and disgust at cruelty, suggesting that cruelty itself in at the foundation of the moral beliefs behind that disgust. Nietzsche defends this "active affect" of cruelty, as he sees much "biological value" in it (cf. 2.11), and so he praises even its crude manifestations, but the real justification (or at least for man's desire to have such justification) is the ends to which this drive can be directed. By mentioning instances of sublimation, Nietzsche points to genuine advancements in which beauty has emerged from ugliness. In BGE 229, as discussed in the previous section, Nietzsche noted that cruelty could be turned inward. One such example in this section is "the heroism and self-torture of the virtuous." Such self-cruelty can be part of self-discipline and improvement. In BGE 229, there was another example of this self-cruelty, one that is better related in this section as a response to pessimism. Nietzsche points to the 'knower,' a type of individual with whom Nietzsche identifies himself (e.g. p.1, 3.12). The knower, compelling himself to seek knowledge, does so counter to the general inclination of the mind to simplicity and counter to many of the desires of his heart (cf. BGE 230).[48] I will discuss this form of self-cruelty later (Chapter 12), but I mention this example now to

[48] In 2.6, Nietzsche refers to open cruelty as "disinterested malice." In regards to the possibility of sublimation of cruelty, cf. 2.24: the "sublime malice" and "ultimate most self-assured mischievousness of knowledge" of *great health*.

note one more example of this sublimation of cruelty. These instances of sublimation should be kept in mind to see Nietzsche's larger purpose with the text. As he will discuss at the end of the essay, his destructive effort is part of a larger, more positive effort, one that points man towards higher, healthier possibilities.

Having offered this clarification on cruelty (and hopefully preempting a pessimistic reaction, or at least subduing it enough to lure the reader on) Nietzsche now returns to the discussion of the debtor-creditor relationship, describing how it became transformed.

Chapter 3 (Sections 8-11) Communal Cruelty – The Individual-Community Relationship

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Section eight is a transitional section, offering an explanation of how the debtor-creditor relationship described in the previous sections came to be transferred and applied to another form of relationship, that between the individual and his community. This relationship will be the focus of discussion for the next three sections (2.9-11). The section opens with a description of the debtor-creditor relationship: it is "the oldest and most primitive personal relationship," and in it, "one person first encountered another person… one person first *measured himself* against another." Nietzsche goes on to add that "no degree of civilization, however low, has yet been discovered in which something of this relationship has not been noticeable." At first glance, this description might seem very strange, as economic interactions are obviously very complex. However, the choice of words qualifies the meaning: primeval man's relations would precede any form of *civilization*, and similarly, Nietzsche almost always refers to man (or human, *Mensch*); the only other instance of 'person' (*Person*) in the essay is in a similarly civilized context ("the most righteous persons," 2.11). Nietzsche seems to be giving a precise meaning to this *personal* relation: it is a relationship between relative equals, accepted mutually by both parties. If there was too great of a power difference, the stronger would just take what he wanted, but because the individuals are of relatively equal power (such that one could not be sure of victory), one must bargain with the other. In contrast to this relationship, Nietzsche adds at the end of the section an example of higher powers compelling lower powers into settlements among themselves.[49]

In these equal, personal relationships (be they agreed on or imposed by a third, more powerful party), man engages in economic relationships, fixing prices, gauging values, calculating equivalents. From all of this activity, man's rational capacities developed as did the earliest form of pride: man now evaluated other animals and felt superior to them precisely because of his ability to think and evaluate. This form of pride seems plausible, and one might think that other distinguishing qualities might also

[49] These higher powers might be the "masters" spoken of in 2.5, the ones with the right to cruelty, who granted entitlements to cruelty to creditors of lower power. Again, however, Nietzsche offers no description of these higher powers.

become matters of pride – such as the ability to enter these personal relationships, or the ability to make and keep a promise.[50] As will be seen in the following sections, however, Nietzsche gives no indication that this early pride influences the communal relationships (such as through an individual concern with honor) – instead, everything is explained in the economic terms of debtor and creditor. As will be discussed below (Chapter 7), Nietzsche seems to be focusing on a slavish type of individual, one concerned only with satisfying some immediate desire, whether that is avoiding punishment, or gaining permission to partake in the 'right of masters,' in the 'festival pleasure' of cruelty. This type of individual does not have the prolonged will of the sovereign individual. The contrast in the different types of individual will become more apparent in section 2.11 and will be discussed further in Chapters 7 and 12.

To return to Nietzsche's discussion, however, he describes the social community emerging from a transformation of the personal relationship between debtor and creditor. This economic relationship is said to precede "any societal associations and organizational forms." Again, Nietzsche seems to be giving a precise meaning to the terms; there are other forms of organization that precede these *social* forms. For example, in 2.17, Nietzsche describes men as being organized according to simple gregariousness (be that of a herd or a hunting pack), and in 2.20, he speaks of the early "'community' organized according to blood-relationships." The *social* community is made up of 'persons' who regard themselves as relatively equal in power, but this form of community, this "communal complex," takes on meaning beyond its individual members. As a whole, the community itself comes to be regarded as creditor, to which all of the individuals are indebted.

Nietzsche describes the emergence of this social form of community as a natural progression out of economic relationships. These relationships developed within earlier "communal complexes," and each person would likely have many different economic relationships within this earlier community. In opposition to the community are other "similar complexes," presumably other tribes; the individuals within the one community would not have the same 'personal' relationships with the individuals in the other

[50] Not to mention a myriad of other distinguishing features, such as a concern with beauty – in all cultures, there is a concern with ornamentation that goes beyond any concern with function.

community. From the economic relations within the community and the contrast with other communities, men developed a sentiment of their combined group of personal relations, and they made sense of the group in terms of the personal relationships with which they were familiar. As Nietzsche describes it, "The eye was simply set to this perspective [of economic relationships]" – and "with that clumsy consistency characteristic of earlier humanity's thinking," this perspective was applied to the communal relationships. Out of the economic practices, both the psychological mechanisms (e.g. evaluation, calculating equivalence) and the economic concepts (such as "exchange," "contract," "debt," "right," "obligation," and "settlement") were "*transferred*" to the understanding of "communal complexes" – one's relation to the community and the other members citizens came to be understood in terms of the earlier debtor-creditor relationship. Fellow community members were regarded as fellow debtors to the community, which as a whole was the creditor. The 'social community,' then, is a community understood in terms of what we would call a 'social contract.'[51] This new form of the debtor-creditor relationship, as well as what the 'debt' consists of, is the topic of the next section.

Nietzsche continues, claiming that in addition to transforming the understanding of the community, the economic perspective also naturally led to the idea of proportionality. Calculating equivalence and prices for their trades, these 'persons' came to believe that everything could be given a price. The 'clumsy consistency' of earlier thinking, "which has difficulty moving but then continues relentlessly in the same direction," quickly led to "the grand generalization": "'every thing has its price; *everything* can be paid off.'" Nietzsche calls this "the oldest and most naïve moral canon of *justice*." With this 'canon,' men had the belief that a settlement could be reached, that something of proportional worth could be offered for any injury suffered. Again, this is only between relative equals (*inter pares*; 1.11) who seek to avoid mutual injury. They reach settlements between themselves, and they force lesser powers to reach settlements. Even among these equals, if the 'proportional' repayment required death, there would

[51] In 2.17, Nietzsche ridicules the notion that man's early 'states' *originated* from contracts. This does not conflict with the description in 2.8-11 of what amounts to a social contract. It is only when earlier communities ("the coarsest and earliest communal complexes") are transformed that they become based on a social contract. As will be discussed in the commentary on section 2.17, neither Hobbes nor Rousseau claim that states *originate* from social contracts.

likely need to be compulsion – and the higher power behind this compulsion would be the community itself, the group of equals forcing its members to obey the rules and laws.

In section 2.4, Nietzsche described the original form of "punishment as *requital*" as being a reaction of anger; when injured, one lashes out and vents one's anger against the agent of an injury. He said that at some point, this anger became moderated and modified by the idea of equivalence, an idea that drew its power "from the contractual relationship between *creditor and debtor*." The natural emergence of this idea has been described in this section. In the next section, Nietzsche discusses an early form of the social community, one lacking this idea of proportionality. In sections 10 and 11, he describes the gradual application of this 'moral canon of justice,' used to moderate and even redirect these feelings of anger.

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Nietzsche introduces this section as a continuation of his investigation into prehistory, noting parenthetically that this prehistory is present at all times or always possible. As previously mentioned, Nietzsche is not discussing physiological changes in man; the prehistoric self is always present in some sense. Man retains some basic form, even if that only means in his underlying passions (such as cruelty) and inclinations (such as to evaluate or measure).[52] These are always present but they may manifest themselves in vastly different ways, depending on the various cultivating influences and constraints put on man. If these influences and constraints are removed, however, man would return to his natural condition. In section 2.2, one such constraint was mentioned. There Nietzsche claimed that the "ethic of custom and the social straitjacket" made man conform to a given society, making man uniform and calculable. Related to this, in 2.3 Nietzsche described man in some form of community, one in which he must promise to forgo some of his natural inclinations. Should he break this promise, he will be punished in some fashion, perhaps horribly so in primitive conditions. Man is thus made to remember his promises. No longer being able to rely on his natural inclinations, he is forced to rely on his rational capacities, which in turn develops with this use (man at last

[52] Cf. BGE 230: there is something underlying all the difference, some sort of human nature ("that basic eternal text, *homo natura*").

"comes to reason;" 2.3).The time span mentioned in 2.3 suggested that this is a process of 'socialization' that occurs in all communities. In each case, however, man's original, 'prehistoric self' is redirected to some degree.[53]

In the previous section, Nietzsche described how the practice of debtor-creditor relationships led to the emergence of the social community, one in which the members regard each others as relatively equal. These members believe they have a contractual relationship with the community itself; the members are fellow debtors to the community as a whole, which is considered to be the creditor. This 'contract' is based in fear of the 'state of nature' outside the community: living in the community, the citizens gain the advantage of being "protected, shielded, in peace and trust," free from worrying about the "injuries and hostilities" to which all those outside the community are exposed. Anyone cast out, "exiled" from the community would be "miserable" in this original condition.[54] The cost, what each citizen gives up for these advantages, is not made explicit, as it would depend on each community and its particular customs. But as previously mentioned, one sacrifice would be the freedom to engage in cruel practices against other people, at least if they were fellow members of the community.[55]

The major difference that emerges from this communal-contractual relationship is the shift in perspective that each member has in regards to injuries and contract breaking. Previously it was a private matter between individuals (and probably their families). It now becomes a public concern, the 'community' taking an active interest in these relationships. This is to say that each member takes an active interest in affairs, whether or not he is immediately affected by those affairs. The community is not especially

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[53] Nietzsche claims that his investigation in this essay is "Always measured with the standard of prehistory." The nature of this standard is left unclear, but it may be this basic form that is a 'prepolitical, natural man.' The measure is the degree to which this basic form is modified or expressed differently.

[54] Nietzsche says that the current German word for misery (*Elend*) hints at this attachment to the community because its original meaning was 'exile.' This is another illustration of the use of etymology in gaining insight into past experience. Etymological evidence is subordinate to Nietzsche's own reasoning, however, as is later revealed by his discussion of the "misery" of even earlier men being confined to the community, unable to escape its constraints (2.16): the precise opposite of the misery discussed here.

[55] The account of the communal relationship in this chapter is, superficially at least, very 'Hobbesian.' It is strange that Hobbes is not mentioned at all in the book. Nor is Rousseau mentioned. I am unsure what to make of the absence of any acknowledgement of these philosophers, as Nietzsche does seem to have them in mind. That said, he is not interested in directly addressing their teaching. In this essay, he is primarily interested in accounting for the psychological and moral changes in man that are related to the development of the bad conscience. Nietzsche is not addressing political life as such; for example, he is not addressing the problem of pride (or *amour propre*) in all men; he only points to pride in the noble type of man.

concerned about one particular member's injuries, however. Rather, it is concerned that one of its members has broken the contract. The community has protected this offending member, both from outsiders and other members of the community, a protection that was given on the condition that the individual obeyed the rules. He has proven himself a liar, a contract breaker, and as such, he must be cast out. This is done partly out of anger, and partly out of fear that he will offend again. This outcast, now returned to the natural state, is no longer protected. As such, he can be attacked by anyone, be that the injured person himself or anyone else who wants to harm the offender. Should the outcast live, perhaps he will be accepted back, having been powerfully reminded of the advantages of the community through being denied them. But if not, others seeing his fate will certainly be reminded of these advantages and how "miserable" they would *be made* if they broke the contract and were cast out of the community.

Members of the community were thus 'punished' for breaking the 'social contract.' As in section five, punishment is in quotations because only in form does it match our notion of punishment, not in intent (cf. 2.13). This 'punishment' is "simply the copy … of the normal behavior to a hated, disarmed, defeated enemy." Such an enemy lost all rights, protections or any claim to mercy and as such, would suffer a cruel, ruthless victory celebration (the "*Vae Victis*!"). Thus, he is not thought of as 'guilty' at this point in history; that he has become an enemy is enough to qualify him for cruelty. Again, Nietzsche invokes the 'festival pleasure of cruelty,' but now with the significant addition of the relation to the *enemy*. Earlier descriptions of this pleasure seemed too indiscriminate. There would have to be at least some criteria for choosing who will be the victim for the 'festival.' Nietzsche is suggesting that the discrimination would be along the lines of a friend-enemy distinction, where only enemies are open to harm (outsiders and strangers being synonymous with enemy). Friends (perhaps those acknowledged as biological kin, later those of the community), by contrast, would not be exposed to this open cruelty. These 'friends' are only open to cruelty once they are reconceived as enemies for breaking the community's rules and superstitions.

Part of this restraint on cruelty can be understood on this contractual basis: if one harms a community member, he will himself be harmed by others from the community, whereas he is free to harm one not protected by the community. This cannot account for

all of the restraint, however, particularly for the restraint that must have existed before the *social* community came into existence. Another very real element is *compassion*, a 'feeling-with' those one deems similar to oneself. Originally this might be family members, but one would also feel compassion to the members of one's community, those made "uniform, like among like" (2.2). All of this said, Nietzsche does not mention compassion at all in *this* essay (other than one mention of 'tragic pity;' 2.7). I suggested above (2.6) that Nietzsche separates revenge from the consideration of punishment in order to show the active desire for cruelty that is also present in the desire to punish. In the first essay, Nietzsche concentrated on revenge and *ressentiment*, perhaps to the exclusion of other affects. Now he seems to be focusing on cruelty. Perhaps he ignores a discussion of compassion in order to present a clearer picture of cruelty.

If one adds compassion to the present account, this would not immediately be problematic given that the punishment is directed towards *an enemy*. If one were to be betrayed by a family member or a friend, for example, that person would be considered an enemy; compassion would vanish and one might then vent one's cruelty on that person. Considering compassion in other parts of the account, however, does introduce some problems. For one, the family is a smaller 'community,' and because of the necessary compassion between the members, the family will not so readily cast out its members or allow them to be punished by other members of the social community. The development of the community itself would also be affected by compassion, one would suspect, such as ties of loyalty. For these reasons, I suspect Nietzsche is overemphasizing cruelty in the present context. In the preface of the *Genealogy*, Nietzsche mentions the modern overestimation of compassion and the problematic nature of the 'morality of compassion' (p.5-6). Perhaps in order to counter this single-minded praise of compassion, Nietzsche is overemphasizing the role of cruelty, highlighting its role in history, especially how it may be a fundamental part of historical developments generally esteemed such as the development of penal codes – and as he will discuss later, in the development of morality and the bad conscience. In a later chapter, I will return to the issue of this overemphasis on cruelty, particularly in the development of the moral bad conscience (Chapter 10); there I will discuss the question of how the other affects are meant to relate to Nietzsche's presentation.

To return to the present section, however, what is clear from the description of the *Vae Victis* and all of its harsh punishments is that the idea of proportionality has yet to be introduced in this social community. For breaking the rules, the offender is cast out, at which point there is no limit to the cruelty that might be released on that person. This is the nascent community; its powers are weak and the actions of even a single transgressor are threatening to the newly formed communal bonds. Only later, as discussed in the next section, will the community moderate its punishments, enforcing an idea of proportionality.

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This moderation in punishment comes only as the community becomes more powerful, hence, more self-confident. Individual criminal transgressions are no longer as dangerous or destructive to the community as they once were, and so the citizens are no longer allowed simply to vent their anger and hostility on the criminal however they please. Nevertheless, much anger at the criminal will remain, particularly in those directly injured. But now the community actually protects the criminal from excessive retribution. As mentioned in sections 4 and 8, the anger of the citizens is to be "held in check and modified" (2.4) by the idea of proportionality. Some might accept this and moderate themselves, while others will have to be compelled; but whichever the case, each crime is treated as something isolated from the criminal himself and as something "*capable of being paid off*." Compromise is thus sought: the criminal is made to pay proportionally for his crime in an effort to satisfy the anger of those harmed or those otherwise concerned with the community's rules.[56]

This compromise and moderation is not done out of concern for the criminal, however, but rather for the community itself: it must defend itself from the excessive reaction of its members, trying to "localize the case and prevent a further or indeed

[56] The threat to the weak community makes sense that the punishments would have to be very harsh, but that said, there is also an opposite consideration: the community might not be able to lose even a single person, particularly if he is a warrior. In such a case, even if he murdered someone, there might be more willingness to find a settlement (e.g. 20 horses to the family) than to endanger the community by losing that person. Of course, if that individual was too dangerous, he would have to be removed, but the point is that even in the nascent community, there would be some need for moderating the 'festival pleasure' of cruelty and for minimizing acting out of vengeance.

general participation and unrest." More than just cruelty, the problem here seems to be that this would bring about an escalating cycle of *revenge*. Primitive communities could allow for unrestrained punishments, but in more developed societies such a reaction would be destructive to the established order. The actual effort to moderate the citizens' anger and desire for vengeance (the "reactive affects") will be expanded on in the next section.[57]

The remainder of this section, however, is spent tracing out the 'logical' trajectory of a society based on the debtor-creditor relationship and the incipient idea of justice that accompanies it. The confirmation of this trajectory is premised on two observations. First, penal law becomes more moderate as the community becomes more powerful and self-confident (and likewise, when it becomes weaker or imperiled, such as in a time of war, it must restore harsher forms of punishment). Secondly, individual creditors become more humane when they are richer. There are many misers who would suggest otherwise. This is a conceivable possibility, however, as they will not *physically* suffer due to an unpaid debt, richer creditors may more readily accept repayment extensions or grant remittances. If the logic holds, and the hypothesis of the community as creditor is also sound, then it is supposedly not unthinkable that a society could emerge that was so confident of its power, it "could allow itself the noblest luxury possible to it – letting those who harm it go *unpunished*." As a sign of its strength, it would be unconcerned and even bless the efforts of its "parasites."[58] This end represents "*mercy*", the "self-overcoming of justice."

It seems fairly clear that this mercy had better remain a *luxury*, such as the *occasional* pardon. Otherwise, the parasites will eventually add up because such absolute

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[57] Nietzsche seems to ignore what seems to be the essential question here: why do the individual members have this change of perspective? The community cannot be reified and treated as a thinking entity; it is made up of its members. Why do they decide that the punishments have become too excessive? Why do they decide that the criminal must be protected? It might be that 'the festival' gets out of hand and they themselves suffer from the destructive effects of this cruelty. Or it might be that sensing their security, they do not see the need to such horrendous punishments; nor would they want to suffer such punishments themselves for small crimes (or to see their family members suffer), and so they collectively agree to limit punishments.

[58] This hypothetical community should not be confused with our own, which Nietzsche notes is losing belief in punishment (2.14). He makes the same observation in *BGE* 201, attributing it to weak, indiscriminate compassion, or as he puts it in this essay, the "morbid softening and moralization of man" (2.7), such that people are unable to bear the thought of even criminals suffering. 'The criminal does not deserve such harsh punishment' is the *reaction* of modern men, feeling great compassion ('a feeling with') for *everything* that suffers. The "noblest luxury" of mercy is radically different. It is based on strength, and is an expression of contempt or indifference – the criminal *is* to blame, he *deserves* his punishment, but the creditor looks ~~away,~~ absolutely indifferent to this parasite (cf. 1.10 on this as *noble* indifference).

mercy implicitly encourages parasitism. Even the richest creditor will become bankrupt, and the strongest social order will crumble. Nietzsche earlier disparaged the notion of angels (2.7), but such a society, one that sounds downright Christian, would have to be made up of them: every member would have to overcome vengeful feelings towards criminals. Were such a law enacted such that no 'authorities' punished criminals (2.5), the citizens, or at the very least, the aggrieved parties would not simply be indifferent and 'turn the other cheek' to the criminals. They would take matters unto themselves, venting their anger at the criminal and it is doubtful that there would be any concern for proportionality. I am uncertain what to make of this fantastical state, this 'merciful society.' Is it meant to show the very absurdity of the exclusively economic notions of justice and communal relationships? That there is more to these relationships than economic foundations, and maintaining the relationships also requires more than economic considerations?[59]

Nietzsche himself seems to have his doubts on the prospects of this 'imagined' society, for he ceases talking about it once he introduces the name mercy and returns to the perspective of the individual: "as goes without saying, it remains the privilege (*Vorrecht*; 'before the law') of the most powerful, better still, his beyond-the-law." Such mercy cannot be legislated; it cannot be asked of the people and so it must remain beyond the law. It seems more likely that Nietzsche is offering *his* conception of mercy as a personal teaching, one of overcoming the *desire* for revenge. In the next section, there is a description of *an individual* (not of a society) who is able to overcome his reactive feelings. It may be possible for a few individuals, but they will need to remain aware of the power of others, of what is a mere parasite and what is a significant threat. Even if one overcomes the desire for vengeance, however, there are still prudential reasons for punishment, as will be discussed in the next sections (2.11-13).

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[59] I am unsure what to make of the change, but it should be noted that at some point along the way, the understanding of justice has shifted somewhat. In describing the original formulation of justice, now Nietzsche writes "everything is capable of being paid off, everything must be paid off" whereas earlier, it was presented as "everything has its price, everything can be paid off" (2.8).

This section is similar to section seven in that it is an open attack on an alternative doctrine. Having just discussed justice and its 'self-overcoming,' Nietzsche targets those who claim that justice originates in the reactive affects, particularly in revenge. This introduces an important distinction to the essay. The reactive affects are those such as "hate, envy, ill will, suspicion, rancor, revenge" which emerge only as a response to some external circumstance. The active affects, which include "lust for mastery" and greed are more spontaneous, being solely dependent on the strength of the individual's drives.[60] Cruelty would be one of these active affects as well (given Nietzsche's praise of the 'aggressive man' referred to below). Both of these types of affects are typically condemned on moral grounds, being treated as simply evil. However, such evaluations go against what Nietzsche calls the "biological value" of these affects: these affects are conspicuous only in higher, stronger individuals. The effect of the moral praise is to favor the weak, those who lack the power to express or act on these affects (cf. 1.14).[61] A proper evaluation of these affects, one in line with their "biological value," would recognize their worth to the health of organisms and species. Obviously, these affects can be senselessly destructive, utterly tyrannical – they are based in power, not the lack of it – but if their worth is recognized, they can be properly encouraged and cultivated, leading to higher, stronger individuals.[62]

The teaching to which Nietzsche is responding (he focuses on Dühring) claims that justice is actually revenge, "hallowed" under a nicer name. Nietzsche commends this teaching for working against current moral prejudices and trying to bring honor to the reactive affects. The effort is nonetheless condemned, however, not only because it is false but because it too is pernicious to "the biological problem." While it 'rehabilitates' the reactive affects, it continues to denigrate the active affects. As in the first essay, the

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[60] The active affects also respond to the environment, but the distinction is that they do not need to be engendered by it. For example, one does not seek out someone to be rancorous towards, but one might seek out money. That said, someone might well seek out someone to be envious of, if that is something that would improve oneself – but such an activity suggests that there is a higher desire at work, such as a 'lust for mastery' in becoming improving oneself, becoming more 'powerful.'

[61] Along these lines, one might as well esteem a eunuch for his sexual moderation and force erotic men to follow suit in order to gain this 'commendable' continence.

[62] Both the active and reactive affects have an important role in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Lust for mastery, *Herrschsucht*, is particularly noteworthy, as it is what Zarathustra esteems, recognizing it as the true name of what he earlier named as his particular virtue, the gift-giving virtue (Z 3.On the Three Evils). Envy can also be productive, as long as it leads one to strive to improve rather than to simply pull down what one envies.

attempts to honor reactive affects and reactive men are carried out by means of hypocrisy and misrepresentation of what is higher (1.10-14, cf. 3.14). The reactive man, the 'man of *ressentiment*,' is said to have done great harm to mankind, bringing gloominess and 'evil' itself, but Nietzsche has yet to say much of this man, other than his "need to appraise his object [of evaluation] falsely and with prejudice." More significantly, Nietzsche claims that the 'man of *ressentiment*' brought about "the invention of the 'bad conscience'" ('that gloomy thing, the bad conscience, the consciousness of guilt'; 2.4). Nietzsche presents this here only as a hint; I will take it up again in the consideration of the moralization of the bad conscience (Chapter 10).

Nietzsche rephrases the teaching: justice *originates* in reactive feelings in general (rather than it *being* revenge). To this claim, he offers "for the love of truth" a "stark reversal" of the hypothesis: rather than the reactive affects being the *original* grounds, "the homeland" of justice, they are the *final* ground that justice conquers. To illustrate this claim, Nietzsche gives the example of the perfectly just man. Most, when confronted by someone who injures or humiliates them, will naturally be harsh: their reactive affects will get the better of them, and they will therefore take a prejudiced view in their evaluation. Revenge takes only the perspective of the injured one. It is about one's own feeling of being aggrieved and desiring the source of that to suffer for it. This desire thus dominates a person's judgment. This just man does have reactive feelings – his objectivity is not indifference or coldness – but he overcomes these feelings, such that even to those who injure and torment him, he will be a fair judge not influenced by his own feelings of injury or insult.

It is a rather interesting description of justice that Nietzsche provides here, for it is not presented as subject to any particular set of laws or rules. Rather, "the just eye, the *judging eye*" is based simply in "fairness" and the attempt to be as objective as possible (cf. 3.12). This just man is concerned with finding a proper evaluation; he seeks to resist all affects that would cloud his judgment, unduly biasing his evaluation, and thus he must overcome the desire for revenge. Conspicuously, Nietzsche does not identify what is actually motivating this commitment to evaluation. He only says that it is not indifference, not the absence of an affect – but is it motivated by an active or a reactive affect? It could be well be reactive; Nietzsche's "stark reversal" did not cover all

possibilities. There is a third, namely, that justice emerges from the reactive affects and 'conquers' the rest of them. Or it might even emerge from revenge itself, but subsequently develop, becoming independent of revenge and aim to conquer it.[63] The question that Nietzsche leaves open is what drives this desire for 'justice'? The justice is described as a rational *limitation* on revenge, but what is the source of reason's power here or what is motivating it? This is not to say that there is a single answer. Perhaps it is a reaction to the ugliness of revenge, or perhaps it is a dominant form of that 'earliest pride' mentioned, that of being an evaluator (2.8). It should also be noted, that there is no indication that this commitment to fair evaluation need apply only to the evaluation of humans. In trying to evaluate other phenomena, there might be other affects that if dominant would skew the interpretation. One must overcome these affects to pursue a fair evaluation, even should that phenomena be somehow harmful to oneself (e.g. to one's pride). In this way, this just disposition that Nietzsche presents "for the love of truth" could equally be called intellectual probity or an *intellectual conscience*, a 'cruel' impetus towards an honest evaluation of the subject of inquiry (cf. 2.6, 3.12, BGE 229).[64]

But to return to the argument, Nietzsche offers a different attack on the claim that justice emerges from the reactive affects. This time he addresses the *administration* of and need for the concept of "right."[65] It has been the "active, strong, spontaneous,

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[63] In 2.8, Nietzsche treats the idea of proportionality as simply emerging from economic practices. It is quite possible that the desire to 'pay someone back' does indeed emerge from a feeling of revenge. Revenge, however, is essentially an overestimation of the value of *one's own* injury. The payback, then, is proportional only to one's anger. This sentiment of revenge, however, may be modified by the practice of evaluation. From all of the economic practices, one sees that there is a limited value to different injuries, a value independent of one's own anger. The desire to give a fair evaluation, for 'justice,' is the "*positive* way of behaving" that overcomes the feeling for revenge. But again, what is motivating the desire for this evaluation and for restraining one's anger?

[64] The 'knower' is described as this individual committed to evaluation, driven by some 'cruel' desire that "compels his mind to knowledge which is *counter* to the inclination of his mind and frequently also to the desires of his heart – by saying NO, that is, when he would like to affirm, love, worship" (BGE 229). The 'knower' is thus compelled to be committed to 'justice' in order to have a free mind not dominated by other affects. In connecting the 'knower,' this "gentleman philosopher" (3.12), to justice, Nietzsche may be suggesting that there is a fundamental relation between justice and the activity of philosophy (though this 'justice' is quite different than what we usually think of it as).

[65] There is a translation issue in this chapter having to do with the German word *Recht*, which most directly corresponds to the English word 'right.' However, even more than in English, it has connotations of law and an obvious relation to justice. Nietzsche is making some important distinctions here, and the words must be translated consistently, despite the awkwardness of doing so. Nietzsche describes the just [*gerecht*] man and justice [*gerechtigkeit*] in a potentially transpolitical way, consisting solely of 'objectivity' and

aggressive" men, who have used "some of their strength" in conducting a war against the reactive affects, trying to moderate and bring order to the senseless raging of reactive men. This is no longer a question of evaluation, but of *imposing* judgments on others. We are again led to ask what motivates this. Why would a person want to impose his judgments (fair or otherwise) on others? One could, for example, try to evaluate fairly but be unconcerned about the application, perhaps preferring to do other things, or evaluate other things. Nietzsche does not identify the motivating affect, but here (unlike in the case of justice) he says that it is an active affect. His two examples of this type of affect were 'lust for mastery' (of whatever sort) and 'greed,' both of which could well be the motivation behind the imposition of right onto others, bringing order to the society.

This effort of *justice* has been carried out in several different ways, ways that have been presented in previous sections: "by pulling the object of *ressentiment* out of the hands of revenge" (the authorities take over punishment 2.5,10), "by setting in the place of revenge the battle against the enemies of peace and order" (casting out 'contract breakers,' allowing them to be punished, 2.9), "by inventing, suggesting, in some cases imposing, compensations" (the 'higher powers' impose settlements among the lower powers, 2.8), and "by raising certain equivalents for injuries to the status of a norm to which *ressentiment* is henceforth once and for all restricted" (the "oldest and most naïve moral canon of justice", i.e. that of proportionality, 2.4-8, esp.10). The result here is that people thereafter *resent* punishment that does not 'fit' the crime. In all of these, by being partially satisfied, partially restrained, the reactive affects are channeled into service of the community: they help fulfill the original promise, that of protecting citizens from hostilities: any who break the accepted rules will be seen as enemies by all the citizens.

It is important to note here that this "war" on the reactive affects can be carried out by radically different means. Likewise, the "active, strong, spontaneous, aggressive" men carrying out this war may be correspondingly different. The most obvious and most emphasized means mentioned is that of brute force: those men with more overt power impose their will and desired forms onto weaker powers (cf. 2.17). In the sense that these

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resisting the reactive affects. The community-bound concepts that will be established are those of right [*Recht*] and wrong [*Unrecht* – 'not right'], which would exist in an unspoken, customary sense, but later become codified by the institution of *law* [*Gesetz*]. Other translators have *Recht* sometimes as just, sometimes as law, sometimes as right.

men rule over their counterparts, they are 'sovereign,' but not in the earlier sense of the term (section 2.2). The far subtler way that this war is carried out is suggested by Nietzsche's claim that settlements are imposed in certain cases, but they can also be "invented, suggested." An interpretation could be offered that, if accepted, would drastically modify the perspective of those who accepted it. In this way, 'lesser powers' would be ruled by sovereign men in the fuller sense, across far longer periods of time than by force alone. The highest form of this kind of rule, the most 'sovereign,' is the presentation of revolutionary interpretations and ideas ('new modes and orders') that have enormous impact on all the 'lesser powers.' This would include the idea of justice as equivalence, as well as the idea of 'free will' introduced by the "moral philosophers of Greece" (2.7).

Of course, the idea of justice had to be made more practical, hence made conventional for the community – many of the 'lesser powers' will neither understand nor be able to apply these grand ideas objectively. The conventional interpretation may have been done by other "active, strong, spontaneous, aggressive" men, those who are typically considered most sovereign, the legislators and lawgivers of their societies. Of course, this lawgiving effort would entail use of force, but it is the *power* of the ideas that will guide the people, convincing them to accept the laws, and thus too the enforcement, which would now be seen as 'legitimate.' This is the most definitive step in this 'war against the reactive affects,' taken when the active powers are strong enough – again, not simply physically strong enough, but also *spiritually* so. This articulation and "institution of *law*" establishes positivistic, conventional conceptions of 'right,' what is declared to be permissible, and 'wrong,' what is declared to be forbidden.[66] Those who act outside the law ("infringements and arbitrary actions") are treated as acting against the law itself, as rebels against this highest power. The rule of law is thus begun.

The accomplishment succeeds in "diverting the feeling of its subjects away from the most immediate injury caused by such wanton acts and thus achieving in the long run

[66] Nietzsche is suggesting a legal positivism as the basis of Right and Wrong: these standards are relative to the community. This need not imply that Nietzsche is himself a relativist. It is important to note that he only says this of right and wrong – he emphatically does not say this of good and bad (cf. 1.17). It should also be noted that Nietzsche makes no mention of good or evil in this section; he is not yet talking about *morality*.

the opposite of what all revenge wants." The citizens become outraged at the law being broken, and they begin to look at all acts from a legalistic rather than personal standpoint (though, again, the last to see things from this legal perspective is the one injured).[67] In this case, the desire for vengeance is channeled into the service of justice. Indeed, for the majority of members, their desire for vengeance *fuels* their desire for justice in the community. This is another answer as to why one might want to impose judgments on others: out of a desire for revenge, though perhaps this desire is not recognized as such. It is, like Dühring's teaching on revenge suggests, hallowed under the name of justice. This does not mean that it is really justice, which Nietzsche treats as fair evaluation, the opposite of revenge. However, what is implied is that behind the *desire* for punishing criminals, to see or make them suffer, there might be the desire for revenge.[68] This must remain a mere suggestion for now, for Nietzsche goes on to talk about law itself. However, I will return to the relation of revenge to the desire for punishment when I consider the role of the reactive affects in 'morality' and the moral bad conscience (Chapter 10).

In the final part of this section, Nietzsche qualifies his praise of the "active, aggressive powers" and their imposition of law. The legal realm, with its absolute standards of 'right and wrong in-itself' may have the beneficial effect of redirecting the reactive affects, but taken too far, it can become pernicious. In contrast to the legal perspective, Nietzsche offers a different (and perhaps higher) perspective, one based in life itself – the "biological standpoint." From this standpoint, nothing is "right" or "wrong" in-itself. Legal systems, in establishing a fixed order, condemn as "wrong" the active affects which would threaten that order. But the "injuring, doing violence, pillaging, destroying" that come from these affects are the way "life acts *essentially*" (cf. BGE 259, BT p.5). Here Nietzsche intimates his teaching on Will to Power, speaking of the "will of life" as seeking power and to create ever "*greater* units of power." Even life

[67] Nietzsche does not discuss what the criminal himself would feel for doing something wrong. There is no indication he would feel *guilty* (cf. 2.14).

[68] This suggests a different way that it would be dangerous for *a society* to become merciful and try to fully overcome the desire for revenge if it cannot be done completely. To the extent that the desire for revenge is removed, there will be an increased apathy for justice, and so less punishment will be pursued for criminals. Crime will flourish, with few doing anything about it, except perhaps the aggrieved parties themselves, in a much less restrained manner than if the 'authorities' had done so.

itself, mere life, is not "right" in-itself, as individual lives may need to be undermined and destroyed to lead to these 'greater units of power.' The legalist standpoint eventually works counter to this will of life: in trying to maintain stability and its supremacy, the law will work to constrain the active affects as well, thus trying to prevent life's necessary "battle of power complexes."[69]

Nietzsche attacks those who see law and right as ultimate ends-in-themselves, those who advocate a "sovereign and universal" legal system. Such teachings are condemned as being counter to the higher will of life, to form greater units of power. Nietzsche specifically mentions here Dühring's "communistic cliché that every will must accept every other will," but this critique applies also to all those who would seriously argue for systems of egalitarianism or mutual recognition of worth or of people as ends-in-themselves. Obviously a great deal of 'power' and complexity is involved in these systems and their underlying interpretations. Indeed, they may be among the "most spiritual manifestations of the will to power," as Nietzsche puts it elsewhere (*BGE* 9). But the effect of these 'power-wills,' is the "destruction" of man and man's future.[70] The power behind this, so highly praised above, is now condemned, for it leads to nothing higher, to no greater unit of power, but rather it is "a secret path to nothingness." Destruction, and its underlying impetus, is only praiseworthy in relation to a higher creation or so it would seem. The will to power is explicitly mentioned in the next section, and this issue will be further explored there.

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[69] This may be why Nietzsche praises "the *more Roman* conception of law": "If they have secured more or less, let that be no crime" (2.5). By allowing for mercy and for cruelty, these laws would thus provide another means for the "battle of power complexes."

[70] The end result is the 'Last Man' described in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Z p.3), the "wretched contentment" of the man who longs for nothing higher in life than petty pleasures and entertainment (cf. end of Chapter 10).

## Chapter 4: (Sections 12-13) Points on Historical Method (Genealogy)

### -12-

In this section, Nietzsche continues his polemic on other teachings, this time attacking methods of interpreting history. At first he continues on the subject of the history of law and punishment but quickly expands to a general point on historical method, insisting that origins and purposes are not to be confused. All too often inquiries treat these as the same, such that an account of purpose is accepted as an explanation of origin. In the study of punishment, for example, if deterrence is considered to be the purpose of punishment, then the need for deterrence is accepted as sufficient explanation of the origin of punishment. To counter this tendency, Nietzsche offers an "important proposition" for historiography: "the cause of the genesis of a thing and its final usefulness, its actual employment and integration into a system of purposes, lie *toto caelo* apart." This is not as anti-teleological as it might at first seem, for the origin could be purposive. At some later point, however, the 'thing' in question may be employed in a different fashion, directed to an end different from its original one and thus given new purpose, new 'meaning.' As Nietzsche says in the next section, purposes are 'fluid,' being changed over time; as such, the *current* purpose of a thing is (likely) unrelated to its original purpose (e.g. a practice, or the meaning of a concept). As such, the current purpose had nothing to do with the origin of that thing.

To describe how these purposes change over time, Nietzsche turns to his theory of the will to power. In this discussion, the origin of a thing is taken for granted – things exist, "somehow coming into being" – but the purpose or meaning of that thing is in flux. These are changed over time by superior forces, which impose new function or meaning onto that thing, using it for different ends. This process of "overpowering and becoming-master-over" is one of reinterpretation: a "new interpreting, an arranging by means of which the previous 'meaning' and 'purpose' must of necessity become obscured or entirely extinguished." This need not imply progress, however, such as an ever increasing amount of power. The original power that gave the function may have subsequently subsided so that a relatively small force could redirect the thing. Also, the newly imposed purpose might have no relation to the previous purpose; its imposition may even have been accidental.

This 'reinterpretive' process of successive-purposes can be seen most clearly in human activities, be they conscious or unconscious. Indeed, several such events have already been discussed. In the emergence of 'social' communities (2.8), man already existed in earlier communal relationships. The nature of these relationships becomes transformed, reinterpreted by the *idea* of economic exchange. The idea of debt and credit is thus transferred to the community, giving it new meaning: the community is now understood to be a creditor and all of its members are similarly reinterpreted to be debtors to that whole. Subsequently, this new understanding of the community seems completely natural to the members; they may even find it hard to imagine that a community could exist otherwise. Another example of this 'reinterpretive' effort is the entire "war" against the reactive affects described in the previous section (2.11). Higher powers redirect the reactive affects through various ideas and practices, thereby making them functions of the community. The reactive feelings of vengeance are thus made to serve a purpose *opposite* of their original intention: rather than being concerned with one's own particular injury, one is outraged by others being injured. Indeed, this perspective to them now seems completely natural ("the thought, now so cheap, so apparently natural..."; 2.4): it simply seems 'right' that a person obey the particular rules, and it is simply 'right' that proportionality should be considered.

Nietzsche does not limit this point on origins and purposes to the human realm, however: he also applies it to the entirety of the organic realm, and even further, to all of nature. In regards to physiology, it should be understood that Nietzsche does not simply reject evolutionary theory. In *BGE* 253, for example, he accepts it as a *truth*, one readily recognized by – because so congenial to – a 'mediocre mind,' such as Darwin's; *but it is a truth nonetheless*. His criticism seems to be parallel to his criticism of the reactive affects (2.11). Reactive adaptation, "the attempted changes of form for the purpose of defense and reaction," can lead to great advances, "successful counter-actions." Indeed, such reactions deserve to be honored. The problem is that, as with the reactive affects, the emphasis on adaptation and self-preservation leads to the overlooking of the 'deeper cause,' what is of even higher "biological" value (2.11). For Nietzsche holds that in the organic realm, what is of preeminence is the "spontaneous, attacking, infringing, reinterpreting, reordering, and formative forces, upon whose effect the 'adaptation' first

follows." This is to say that he gives primacy to the force that initiates the change; some force 'presses against the environment' or against the organisms, *compelling* them to adapt to the change. This might merely be two reactive forces coming into conflict, or, as the description suggests, one force may be an active, aggressive force that is trying to change its environment and dominate over what it encounters. But what is that imposing 'force'?

The general answer that Nietzsche gives is that it is a 'will to power.'[71] As argued in *BGE* 13: "a living thing seeks above all to *discharge* its strength — life itself is will to power—: self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent *results*." Organisms seek to discharge their strength and express their will. As the inverse of this, they avoid having this discharge constrained by other forces (this is the "instinct of freedom," a.k.a. "the will to power," cf. 2.18). If the organisms are constrained by something stronger than them, they will try to escape or overpower that constraint. If they cannot overpower it, they will express their strength in whatever way they still can within the bounds of that constraint. However, if they react, struggling against the force and trying to overcome it, they may be changed; these are the "attempted changes of form for the purpose of defense and reaction." Through this change, they might even overcome that opposing force (a "successful counter-action"). While they may be free again, they will have been changed by the encounter.[72] Nietzsche is emphasizing the need to identify the imposing force that initiated the change; the force might have been an environmental change or perhaps the threat from other organisms. Even in the latter

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[71] In arriving at this hypothesis, Nietzsche declares that he holds psychology as the queen of the sciences (*BGE* 23). Modern scientists have demonstrated man's origins in animal life, but having understood all animal life as simply mechanistic, they assume that man too is of this character. Obviously, our animal origins can explain part of human behavior, but this mechanistic account is inadequate for other parts of our nature. Giving psychology primacy, Nietzsche does not interpret away all human experience. We have a privileged perspective unto our own psychology (though this too is complicated, by the prejudices of language, for example). As in 2.11, Nietzsche offers a "stark reversal." Rather than reinterpreting ourselves in light of mechanistic 'laws of nature,' we should apply our experience of willing to our understanding of nature. The hypothesis is that willing may have analogues in animals, and indeed, in all of nature.

[72] To provide an analogy of this process, one might think of a mold being pressed onto something that is expanding. This thing will expand within the confines of the structure, taking on the form imposed by the mold. It might continue expanding, however, within the imposed confines and break the mold, overcoming it. Its form will have been changed from the encounter. It is not enough to ask about the eventual shape that was taken; one must ask about the mold and why it was imposed in the first place. This change here is only the external shape, but in a different case, the expanding force might also have nowhere to expand but back inward, being 'internalized.' A psychological idea of "internalization" will be part of Nietzsche's discussion of the development of the original bad conscience in 2.16.

cause, the aggressiveness of the organisms is overlooked; it is considered to be just another instance of an adaptation, a reaction rather than an active attempt to dominate over something. As such, the focus on reactions and adaptations overlooks the active forces, the 'will to power.'

As with his criticism of the reactive affects, Nietzsche's major critique is not primarily against whatever inadequacies there may be to modern biological theories. Rather, the criticism is of the pernicious effects they have on human life. Social Darwinists, such as Herbert Spencer, take the supposed reactivity of nature to imply that *all* of life, even human life, is of this reactive character; and so the reactive, adaptive drives in man are praised. This ignores what Nietzsche treats as naturally higher, namely, those parts of the organism that have the "master role… in which the will of life appears active and form-giving." Such teachings, then, are "to the detriment of life." Life in general is not harmed by human theories, but rather, these teachings ignore or condemn the active affects *in humans*. These affects are then neglected or suppressed rather than properly cultivated. As such, the highest form of life, man, or at least what he could be, is undermined.

Nietzsche claims that the popularity of these theories of adaptation is based in a prejudice, the modern, "democratic idiosyncrasy" that rejects all notions of hierarchy and mastery such that nothing is privileged. This prejudice thus rejects the notion that some forces could be superior to others – because accepting this would imply that there is an order of rank in humans based on the different value of forces and drives. Instead, everything, including all forces in nature, is of an equal value. Because of this commitment ("No God, no master!"; *BGE* 22, 202), democratic men would rather "learn to live with absolute randomness, indeed mechanistic senselessness of all happening than with the theory of a *power-will* playing itself out."[73]

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[73] Nietzsche's criticism of the democratic prejudice does not mean that this 'mechanistic senselessness' that it believes in is not true. What he is criticizing is the affective commitment that is determining the judgment, clouding the evaluation. These democrats believe in this 'mechanic senselessness' *because* they do not want to believe in a hierarchy of men, and so they refuse to believe in a hierarchy of forces. That said, Nietzsche praises the active forces, those "spontaneous, attacking, infringing, reinterpreting, reordering, and formative forces, upon whose effect the 'adaptation' first follows." This would seem to imply that he is not subscribing to a predeterminism. That is, he is not claiming there is just a 'first cause' that is being played out through subsequent mechanistic reactions. However, he also criticizes the idea of free will, or at least his phrasing of it: the "absolute spontaneity of man in good and evil" (2.7). While I am ultimately unsure as to Nietzsche's stance on this free will issue, I will offer some thoughts in Chapter 12.

Despite Nietzsche's condemnation of this democratic prejudice, it should be noted how Nietzsche describes it, this now "ruling instinct and taste." He uses the same terms of lordly activity, of 'mastering over' that he has praised throughout the section. In trying to gain dominance, this democratic "*misarchism*" (a hatred of rule that nevertheless wants to rule), has "disguised itself in the most spiritual forms" and has become strong enough to "become master over all physiology and theory of life." In dominating these theories, it has come to affect all of modern human life. This is quite an accomplishment, similar to the above mentioned interpretations of the supremacy of law, or to the first essay's description of the slave revolt in morality overthrowing the supposedly superior masters (cf. 1.9). Despite the strength of this democratic idiosyncrasy, however, Nietzsche condemns it – its strength and successful expression of 'will to power' is not enough to earn his approval. Why?

One possibility is that Nietzsche is condemning the means of the take-over. The victory of this democratic sentiment is a cheat. Rather than openly challenging and proving their superiority to the active affects, the reactive powers and the theories of reactivity have, "by sleight of hand," simply removed activity as one of life's basic concepts. The active affects have not been overpowered as much as they have been ignored and undermined. This is akin to an envious man cheating to win, pulling down his superior rather than improving himself. That said, regardless of the means, the democratic sentiment has been successful; it has become powerful and it has had enormous impact on man; it has clearly become very powerful. Perhaps Nietzsche's criticism is against the ends towards which this sentiment is directing man. This is the cessation of any "battle of power complexes" described in the previous section; the end is towards decline and nothingness (2.11). In contrast, the destruction that is part of a "true *progressus*" is "in the form of a will and way to *greater power*"; that is, to be justified, the destruction should be a means to a higher end (2.24).[74] But how is this power

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There I will return to the topic of the Sovereign Individual, the "master of a free will," and discuss the relation of strong versus weak wills with this notion of active forces.

[74] On this issue, cf. JS 370: "Nowadays I avail myself of this primary distinction concerning all aesthetic values: in every case I ask, 'Is it hunger or superabundance that have become creative here?' At first glance, a different distinction may appear more advisable – it's far more noticeable – namely, the question of whether the creation was caused by a desire for fixing, for immortalizing, for *being*, or rather by a desire for destruction, for change, for novelty, for future, for *becoming*. However, both types of desires prove

measured? Is there some higher standard whereby Nietzsche can judge such expressions of power? Perhaps an imagined possibility of some super-power?

Nietzsche does provide an alternative end, that of the 'Sovereign Individual.' In 2.2, he described this individual as the end product of the 'tree' of history: everything in history has been preparing for and growing towards this individual. As with "the ethic of custom and the social straitjacket," this Sovereign Individual could justify and give meaning to all the "hardness, tyranny, mindlessness, and idiocy" of the past that has been 'a means' towards him. This description has become quite odd, however, in light of Nietzsche's historical method (a method that is surely meant to be self-reflexive). In the current section, Nietzsche rejects precisely these kinds of teleological accounts that conceive of history as a "*progressus* towards a goal." Nietzsche does claim, however, that meanings, purposes, or goals can be subsequently imposed on a process, guiding it in a new direction. Perhaps this could even apply to an interpretation of history itself. An historical reinterpretation could attempt to impose meaning thereby co-opting a blind process – or a process that has subsequently become destructive because of previous reinterpretations of history (such as those that teach absolute law or egalitarianism as the end of history; 2.11). It may be that the rhetoric of Nietzsche's attack against the democratic prejudice is in service of such a reinterpretative effort. He offers no praise to the power of the democratic spirit because he is trying to overcome it with a new interpretation, one that is part of a "will and way to *greater power*."[75]

The question remains, however, of the justification of this higher will, this greater power. Towards the end of the essay, Nietzsche addresses the purposes behind his polemic, answering the question of why he is being so destructive. As such, this question

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ambiguous upon closer examination, and can be interpreted under the first scheme, which seems preferable to me.

"The desire for *destruction*, for change and for becoming can be the expression of an overflowing energy pregnant with the future (my term for this, as is known, 'Dionysian'); but it can also be the hatred of the ill-constituted, deprived, and underprivileged one who destroys and *must* destroy because what exists, indeed, all existence, all being, outrages and provokes him."

[75] It is also possible that rather than trying to overcome democracy wholly, Nietzsche is trying to create a reaction within it: "attempted changes of form for the purpose of defense and reaction" that would lead to "successful counter-actions." It is difficult to say what these would consist of (a society that grants some notion of hierarchy? Some within the society actively concerned with hierarchy within the bounds of the society?). The possibility is that democracy might be slightly improved, or at least some of the more overtly dangerous qualities might be minimized. In this work, Nietzsche's polemical language focuses on destruction not modification, so I will discuss his purposes in those terms, but this other possibility of modification should be kept in mind.

is best delayed until then. There is much of the polemic that is yet to be considered, however, as Nietzsche has only briefly mentioned morality (2.7) and the bad conscience (2.4). Before moving to a consideration of these, however, Nietzsche offers an important clarification on his historical method, one that reveals what he means by a 'genealogy.' This genealogical method will be used in the explanation of the moralization of the bad conscience (2.21-22).

-13-

Having discussed his "major viewpoint on historical method," Nietzsche returns to apply it specifically to the history of punishment. One must distinguish two elements in punishment, he claims. The first is that which is enduring: this is the set of events, the procedure common to all punishing. That said, Nietzsche does not actually say what these common procedures are. To speculate, 'punishment' lacking any meaning would seem to be simply harming someone. Nietzsche previously spoke of 'punishment' in quotations when describing the 'festival pleasure' of cruelty in sections 2.5 and 9; in the latter section, he claimed that "war (and the warlike cult of sacrifice) has supplied all the *forms* in which punishment appears in history" (2.9).[76] If this is the original form of punishment, it makes sense that Nietzsche offers no account of the actual origin, as it is simply a brute fact of our nature, a natural aggressiveness. Indeed, as he earlier pointed out, even apes can be cruel to each other (2.6); so in that sense, perhaps they too engage in 'punishment.'

The second element that must be distinguished is that which is fluid: the meaning, purpose and expectations that are associated with the procedure of punishment. This too is difficult to identify, not only because the purposes can change over time – but because at later points in history, people might have come to associate many different purposes or meanings to a single practice. With this claim, Nietzsche introduces a modification to his earlier point on the successive reinterpretations of purpose. The discussion of the previous section concentrated on a reinterpretation or an idea that is so powerful that it

[76] While there may have been fines given to criminals, I assume Nietzsche's time did not have the odious punishment of 'community service.' It is difficult to see how *war* would have supplied this form, the 'set of events' entailed in these punishments. Perhaps his claim allows for the degeneration of those forms (e.g. community service as slavery, fines as tribute or the ransom of prisoners).

overwrites previous meanings. In such a case, people would forget the previous meaning or no longer see how it could have been a meaning; the new purpose simply seems to be the right and natural way. What Nietzsche is adding now is that previous meanings are not always (or perhaps are rarely) completely overwritten. Instead, when the practice is reinterpreted, the previous meanings remain, still being associated with the practice. The practice, then, might have many possible purposes for which people believe it should be applied.[77] Initially, these disparate meanings can be identified, but at some point, they become inseparable such that it is difficult if not impossible to identify the actual purpose of the practice. Thus, with no clear 'defining purpose,' there is no single definition for the practice. Nietzsche describes this in regards to punishment:

> In a very late stage of culture (for example in present-day Europe), the concept 'punishment' in fact no longer represents a single meaning at all but rather an entire synthesis of 'meanings': the previous history of punishment in general, the history of its exploitation for the most diverse purposes, finally crystallizes into a kind of unity that is difficult to dissolve, difficult to analyze and—one must emphasize—is completely and utterly *undefinable*. (Today it is impossible to say for sure why we actually punish [...]).

This is not to say that punishment has become meaningless. Rather, it is applied for many purposes. People might not even recognize all of these purposes, nor are all of them relevant in every case. For example, punishment might be applied with the hope of it accomplishing deterrence, vengeance, public safety, or reforming the criminal. Perhaps all of these are meant to apply, or perhaps none of them are thought to be relevant.

This 'crystallization' creates a problem for one who seeks to understand the practice, concept or phenomenon in question because it is difficult even to identify the constituting parts of the synthesis. At earlier stages of the synthesis, however, there might

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[77] Nietzsche does not say so, but one would suspect that the form itself is resistant to some purposes and that the synthesis of meanings might also be resistant to further additions. This should especially be so in the case of a well-written law, one whose 'original intent' is of key importance for subsequent legal interpretation.

be many meanings that people identify in a given practice, but these can be identified separately. In terms of punishment, at an earlier time, the procedure might still be applied for a single purpose. This suggests the need for historical study:

> In an earlier stage, by contrast, that synthesis of 'meanings' still appears more soluble, also more capable of shifts; one can still perceive in each individual case how the elements of the synthesis change their valence and rearrange themselves accordingly, so that now this, now that element comes to the fore and dominates at the expense of the remaining ones, indeed, in some cases one element (say the purpose of deterrence) seems to cancel out all the rest of the elements.

As I discussed in the preface to this interpretive essay, this description of the complex nature of punishment points to Nietzsche's 'genealogical method.' The purpose that Nietzsche has given genealogical study is that of picking apart a complex phenomenon so that one can identify the constitutive elements. Isolating these elements and thereby seeing how they make up the larger synthesis helps one understand the modern phenomenon. However, more is required. In the previous section, Nietzsche condemned the prejudice of stopping at the 'reaction,' at merely identifying what something has become. The more important question is of the force that brought about the change. As he said in the section, "all purposes, all utilities are only *signs* that a will to power has become master over something less powerful and has stamped its own functional meaning onto it" (2.12). In regards to the synthesis of meaning, the question is what is that force (or the forces) that led to the synthesis? In the later sections of this second essay, Nietzsche demonstrates this type of genealogy in his study of the moral bad conscience. As will be discussed, the moral bad conscience is composed of several originally independent 'strands.' In discussing this "entanglement" (2.22), I will also identify the active forces Nietzsche presents as being behind the process of 'moralization' (Chapter 10).

To return to the meaning of punishment, however, Nietzsche lists a multitude of conceivable reasons for punishing. He does this to illustrate how complicated the phenomenon is and how hard it is to understand. In doing so, he thus points to the need for a genealogy of punishment but does not actually provide it himself. How these different purposes form the synthetic whole is not discussed. Nor, more importantly, does Nietzsche identify the motivation behind applying these or how it was that they were made to coalesce into the modern form of punishment.

I will not go through the various purposes for punishment that Nietzsche mentions here, but I will note some conspicuous absences. For one, there is no mention of a concern with the gods. Historically, most criminal codes had some relation to theological concerns: 'the gods' expect certain ways of behavior and the community punishes transgressors in order to appease the gods (who would otherwise 'punish' the community itself; cf. D 9). Nietzsche will address this gap later in the essay, as it is an essential step in the development of the moral bad conscience.

Perhaps more bizarre is that Nietzsche does not mention the most obvious reason for punishment: that is, for *retribution*. There is no mention of vengeance as being the reason itself for punishing the criminal. The closest Nietzsche comes to granting revenge as being a reason for punishment is when he mentions "Punishment as a compromise with the natural state of revenge, insofar as the latter is still upheld and claimed as a privilege by powerful clans." In this case, a judge evaluating the need for punishment is considering the need to appease other powers within the community. He is not motivated by revenge himself but he recognizes the necessity of satisfying others' desire for vengeance. Indeed, most, if not all, of the reasons Nietzsche gives for punishment have nothing to do with a desire for making or seeing someone suffer. Each of these is a prudential judgment as to why the criminal should be punished (e.g. for deterrence of other potential criminals, or to prevent the criminal from harming others again). One desires the effect, not the suffering itself.

There is also no mention of guilt in this list. That is, that the criminal *deserves* his punishment because he chose to commit his crime. In 2.4, Nietzsche claimed that this idea of punishment is the dominant one today: a thought "now so cheap and apparently so

natural, so unavoidable...."[78] This notion of guiltiness is conspicuous by its absence. In the next two sections, Nietzsche expands on this observation, claiming that for most of man's history, there was no notion of 'guilt.'

[78] As will be discussed later (Chapter 10), Nietzsche treats the spirit of revenge as being the actual motivation behind the desire to punish someone because of their intentional choice. *Even if this is the case*, however, this does not mean that there are no reasons for punishment. As stated, most of the purposes of punishment listed in this section have nothing to do with the desire for revenge.

Chapter 5: (Sections 14-15) The Historical Absence of the Feeling of Guilt

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Having looked at various possible meanings of punishment, Nietzsche turns to what he says is the popular view of the reason for punishment: people think that punishment is *useful* for "awakening in the guilty one the *feeling of guilt*." If so, punishment could thus utilize the "bite of conscience" that is associated with the bad conscience. At last Nietzsche expressly takes up the topics of guilt and bad conscience – the ostensible subjects of this second essay. But he addresses these only to deny their pertinence to cases of punishment, pointing out that guilt and bad conscience are actually quite rare in punished criminals. "The prisons [...] are *not* the breeding places where this species of gnawing worm most loves to flourish." One obvious reason for this is that criminals likely have less of a bad conscience in the first place. In the cases where there is a bad conscience, however, it does seem that by being punished, one's feeling of guilt can be decreased. This makes sense in light of Nietzsche's conception of guilt as a notion emerging from the conception of debt: to some extent guilt can be 'paid off.'[79] The criminal, being 'guilty' of breaking some promise or contract, is in a state of 'debt.' By being punished, recompense is exacted. As such, he would actually have *less* reason to have any consciousness of a debt/guilt. 'His debt to society has been paid,' people would say. If anyone should feel guilt, it would be the criminal who is *not* caught and punished, for he still owes a 'debt.'

This is presuming, however, that there is moral significance already attached to such a debt. Otherwise, the only likely sentiment would be fear of punishment. If one has committed a crime, one might live in constant fear of an eventual punishment. While he does not yet reveal the source of the moralization of debt, Nietzsche does indicate that punishment delays it: "in those millennia *before* the history of man... it is precisely through punishment that the development of the feeling of guilt has been most forcefully *held back* – at least with respect to the victims on whom the punishing force vented itself." Part of the necessary moralization is that a deed must be deemed "*in itself* reprehensible." For this to happen, Nietzsche suggests that the feeling of debt must linger. Only when it becomes a continuous feeling will it be able to transform into a moral sense.

[79] This also suggests that there is a basis to Nietzsche's debt-guilt hypothesis beyond German etymology.

Moreover, it seems that the judgment of the deed must come from standards beyond the community. As long as it is merely the community's ('human, all-too-human') judgment, the cruelty of the criminal, for example, is not differentiated in kind from the cruelty of the community in punishing him. It will not be until Nietzsche discusses man's relationship with his god(s) that he will describe these different standards of judgment.

This form of the debt-relationship will be discussed in 2.19-20, but in the debt-relationship between individual and community described here, Nietzsche expressly denies that there was any notion of guiltiness. Judges had no notion that they were dealing with a "guilty one," that is, with one who had *chosen* to do his crime. Instead, the criminal was regarded merely as an "irresponsible piece of fate." He will be punished but simply because of his actions, not his intentions. Likewise, the criminal himself viewed his condition as a piece of fate. He would certainly be afraid of the immanent punishment, but he would feel no "inner pain," no moral regret at what he had done.

As I previously pointed out (in 2.4), the absence of a "consciousness of guilt" does not mean that these premoral men had no bad conscience. As Nietzsche will claim in 2.16, the bad conscience exists in all humans bound to society – which would include this 'irresponsible piece of fate' criminal who is being faced with judgment. As will be discussed in the next section, there is a previous form of the bad conscience, a *premoral* form that has nothing to do with guilt.

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This amoral form of "bad conscience" was remarked upon and even shared by Spinoza, Nietzsche claims. Having "sent good and evil into exile among the human illusions," the world, for Spinoza, "stepped back again into that innocence in which it had lain before the invention of the bad conscience." The *moral* bad conscience, then, is a relatively recent phenomenon, one dependent on the moral concepts of 'good' and 'evil.' Before this moralization (and, it would seem, after one gets beyond it) the bad conscience exists in a very different form, as do the so-called "pangs of conscience." For Spinoza, these 'pangs' were simply a sadness about the unexpected outcome of events.[80] This was

[80] Unfortunately, I have very little familiarity with Spinoza's work, and so I am unsure what to make of Nietzsche's treatment of Spinoza here. Understanding this discussion requires more than just the line from

the case with premoral men as well. When captured and punished for transgressions, these men did not feel any remorse. They did not have any moral sentiment of "I should not have done that," but they simply saw that "something has gone unexpectedly wrong here." The criminal was criticized on the grounds of prudence: he was imprudent for not foreseeing that his actions would lead to him being punished – or alternatively, he was imprudent for being caught.

Nietzsche thus points out another complexity in the study of punishment. The actual effect of punishment may be completely different, even the opposite of the purpose for which it is applied. The punishment might actually encourage the criminal (should he live) to become more competent in his transgressions. In this sense, "insofar as [injury] makes prudent, it also makes bad" (at least in the eyes of the community). However, as mentioned in 2.3, this punishment can lead to some improvements in man, compelling him to resist his natural inclinations. Punishment may result in "a sharpening of prudence, in a lengthening of memory, in a will hereafter to proceed more cautiously, more mistrustfully, more secretively, in the insight that one is once and for all too weak for many things," – thus, certain crimes should not be attempted – "in a kind of improvement in self-assessment." The person is thus improved to the extent that he comes to discipline himself.

Such benefits are limited, however. As mentioned, this punishment may well simply encourage criminals to become better criminals, thus making them more dangerous. There is a more common effect of punishment: it "often enough makes [men] stupid." This is because the person is dominated by fear, concerned only with avoiding punishment. Nietzsche says this is 'fortunate,' and it may be in the eyes of the community, given the alternative of making the criminal more competent. This again points to the need for a rational reason for punishment, one beyond the desire for vengeance. One such reason may be to improve the individual being punished, but if that is not possible, then the punishment should help the community, perhaps by containing or removing the danger to it. Punishment motivated by nothing but the desire for revenge, carried out simply for the sake of making the person suffer, however, is most likely to

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the ethics to which Nietzsche refers, but some understanding of Spinoza's overall effort to banish good and evil in order to "defend the honor of his 'free' god." It is curious that Nietzsche only mentions the *similarity* between a philosopher 'beyond good and evil' men 'before good and evil.'

result in making that person worse (be that more dangerous or more stupid), rather than improving him.

That said, even this harm might open the possibility of later improvement. In the next three sections, Nietzsche describes what he at first treats as the most extreme harm ever done to man: through great tyranny and cruelty, the "the greatest and most uncanny of sicknesses" emerged in man. This is how Nietzsche describes the bad conscience, a sickness, one that emerged when man was forced to abandoned his natural instincts and thus overcome his "*strong* form of health," the natural forgetfulness that Nietzsche described in section 1. Men were thus made worse, 'sicker' than previous animal life – but as Nietzsche will go on to discuss, this is a sickness that introduces great potential for the future of man.

Interlude: Towards the Genealogy of the Bad Conscience

Before moving on to discuss the remaining sections, I will offer a brief synopsis of the essay so far as well as the discussion that is to come. In section 2.4, Nietzsche introduced what seems to be the guiding question of the essay: "But how, then, did that other 'gloomy thing,' the consciousness of guilt, the entire 'bad conscience' come into the world?" (2.4). As previously discussed, this conflates two easily confused but nonetheless analytically distinct elements, the bad conscience and the consciousness of guilt. As the previous sections (2.14,15) have made clear, their outright congruence is characteristic only of a relatively recent form of the bad conscience – the *moral* bad conscience. In section 2.21, Nietzsche will describe the moral bad conscience as a particular 'entanglement' of a concept of debt with an earlier, premoral form of the bad conscience. In terms supplied by Nietzsche's discussion of punishment in 2.13, this 'entanglement' is a 'synthesis' of different elements. These elements are now difficult to see separately, hence easily conflated, because they have become crystallized into a single thing: the moral bad conscience. As described in 2.13, one must study the history of the thing to pick apart the separate elements. One may then gain an understanding of how it was that these elements came together, as well as how they transformed in the encounter, forming the modern phenomenon. The second essay of the *Genealogy* represents such an historical analysis of the moral bad conscience as I will present in the following chapters of this interpretive essay.

Up to this point in the second essay, Nietzsche has presented the origins and development of the concept of debt. The next three sections (2.16-18) will describe the original, premoral form of the bad conscience. Roughly speaking, these are the elements of the moral bad conscience, but their combination is not enough. Indeed, Nietzsche has already offered indications of the early 'entanglement' of the consciousness of debt with a premoral bad conscience (cf. 2.5). Before addressing this, however, I will first discuss the original, premoral form of the bad conscience (Chapter 6). In Chapter 7, I will apply Nietzsche's discussion of the bad conscience to the previous chapters to explain the premoral 'debt-conscience' (the consciousness of debt) that existed in debtors and in members of the social community. In Chapter 8, I will discuss the new form of debt relationship presented in 2.19-20, a debt relationship between the individual and his

god(s). The belief in gods, the feeling of debt to them and the premoral bad conscience will thus be brought together. In sections 21 and 22 (as will be discussed in Chapter 9), Nietzsche will reveal how it was that that these various elements became moralized. The result is that debt becomes guilt, ancestor gods become a moral god and the bad conscience becomes the moral bad conscience. This particular entanglement and transformation will be explained in Chapter 10. To begin, then, I will now discuss the Nietzsche's presentation of the original, premoral form of the bad conscience.

## Chapter 6 (Sections 16-18): The Original (Premoral) Bad Conscience

### The Original Bad Conscience:

*An animal soul turned on itself, taking sides against itself*

Nietzsche's hypothesis on the origin of the bad conscience is that it emerges when man undergoes "the most fundamental of all changes he ever experienced – the change of finding himself enclosed once and for all within the sway of society and peace" (2.16). Humans were originally gregarious animals, adapted to their natural environment and guided by their instincts. Of these natural instincts, Nietzsche emphasizes the "instincts of freedom," the active, aggressive drives including: "Hostility, cruelty, pleasure in persecution, in assault, in change, in destruction" (2.16).[81] Some of the groups of these original men are more aggressive, more powerful than others. It is these men, "some pack of blond beasts of prey, a race of conquerors and masters," who, by means of violent force, bring about the radical change in man's original condition, enslaving those less powerful than them (2.17).[82] This establishes the first 'state,' characterized as a "terrible tyranny."[83] In this 'tyranny,' the masters impose new form and function upon their slaves,

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[81] These instincts could also be described as man's primal impulses, his dominant emotions and desires. Nietzsche identifies these instincts as original man's "regulating, unconscious and infallible drives" (2.16). As such, I will be using 'instinct' or 'drive' interchangeably.

[82] Included amongst these *blond* beasts are "Roman, Arab, Germanic, Japanese nobility, Homeric heroes, Scandinavian Vikings" (1.11).

[83] Nietzsche derides the "flight of fancy" that conceives of the state as originating in a contract. He does not identify anyone, but he seems to have in mind 'state of nature' theorists, such as Hobbes and Rousseau, who put such import on the contractual basis of political society. While their followers may subscribe to this "flight of fancy," Hobbes and Rousseau do not have the state *originating* from a contract. Hobbes, for example, grants that the original form may come from natural force: "paternal dominion," "as when a man maketh his children to submit themselves and their children to his government, as being able to destroy them if they refuse" or "dominion by conquest" (despotism), when one "by war subdueth his enemies to his will, giving them their lives on that condition" (Leviathan, xvii.15). This "sovereignty by acquisition" is 'contractual,' but its nature is that the enslaved, "for fear of death or bonds authorize all the actions of that man or assembly that hath their lives and liberty in his power (Leviathan, xx.1). This is in contrast to what would be more recognized as a contract: "sovereignty by legislation" wherein "men agree among themselves to submit to some man, or assembly of men, voluntarily, on confidence to be protected by him against all others" (Leviathan, xvii.15).
Rousseau, likewise, grants that the origins of a political organization may well be in force and enslavement. The strong do conquer and enslave the weaker, and as long as they remain stronger, the conquered will obey – this is an act of prudence, obeying present necessity. As soon as the slaves are strong enough, or the masters grow weaker or complacent, the slaves should rise up and take back their freedom. This political 'state' remains in a state of war, wherein the masters must constantly be ready to fight and enforce their wills. However, from this violent origin, a different type of state may emerge if the people accept and

enforcing their orders by means of brutal punishments. The slaves must act according to their masters' orders; through pain and fear, their natural drives are suppressed. Nevertheless, these drives continue to demand expression and are so powerful that they cannot be utterly denied. Lacking any avenue for external expression, these drives are said to be forced back inwards, being released on the other parts of the slave's soul. These aggressive drives being released inwards (the "*internalization* of man") is what Nietzsche identifies as the original form of the bad conscience – "this instinct for freedom, driven back, suppressed, imprisoned within and finally discharging and venting itself only on itself: this, only this, is *bad conscience* in its beginnings" (2.17).

This characterization of the bad conscience, of the soul attacking the soul, will likely seem rather bizarre at first. Most think of the bad conscience as being some separate 'faculty' or "*instrumentum*" of the soul (2.14) whose 'content' is supplied by an external source, such as society or 'the Holy Spirit.' But in Nietzsche's presentation, the bad conscience is a particular formation of the soul itself; the bad conscience is "an animal soul turned on itself, taking sides against itself" (2.16). To understand how the soul can 'take sides against itself,' it will help to have first some understanding of what Nietzsche means by the 'soul.' Typically the soul is seen as an indivisible whole ("*soul atomism*"; BGE 12), but Nietzsche suggests that the soul is actually a multiplicity of different drives and affects. These different parts of the soul struggle to express themselves, and based on their different strengths, an order of rank is formed. This order is something akin to a social structure (cf. BGE 12), or as Nietzsche said earlier in the essay, "our organism is set up oligarchically" (2.1). The strongest drive or constellation of drives is what rules the soul, directing the organism itself.[84] As the analysis proceeds, more will be said about Nietzsche's conception of the soul, but what is most important

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support the existing order. By making a mutual contract between themselves to accept this rule, the force is "made legitimate" (*Social Contract* 1.1). This new state, resting on the foundation of the people's consent, "transforms [the masters] force into right, and obedience into duty" (*SC* 1.3).
Nietzsche's account of the *origin* of the state is relatively similar, as is the eventual development into a community wherein the members understand themselves as being in a contractual relationship. The members are mutual debtors to the collective whole (cf. *GM* 2.9). The major difference in the accounts is that Nietzsche focuses much more on the primitive era of man, on all that must be changed in man before such a contract can occur, before there can be a *foundation* based on promises.

[84] In neither BGE nor GM does Nietzsche expressly acknowledge that this 'new' conception of the soul corresponds to Sokrates' account in the *Republic* of a similar city/soul analogy in which there are different drives competing for dominance, the various loves (e.g. love of wealth, or honor, or victory, or wisdom).

for the moment is that the soul has parts which can act against each other, struggling to dominate the whole of the soul. It should be noted already, however, that the original bad conscience is also described as the conflict of parts, some ruling over others. The implication is that this original bad conscience *is* the original, distinctly *human* form of soul. More will be said about this shortly.

In this bad conscience, some parts of the soul act against other parts, trying to direct the organism itself towards some given end. In the slave, that end is compliance with the masters' orders. This is to say that the slave's taking on a functionary role is not simply the immediate effect of the master's violent punishments. The pain provides the first impetus, but the compliance itself comes from the work of one part of the slave's soul (which desires to avoid further pain) mastering over the other parts and forcing them into compliance. The force at work in suppressing and redirecting the rest of the soul is the internalized aggressive drives, the "instincts of freedom" being released on the "entire old animal self" (2.18). Nietzsche identifies this force as being another way of speaking of his own concept of the "will to power" (2.18). In the case of masters, they are free to express themselves as they desire. As such, they vent their 'will to power' externally, imposing form on others, thereby building this earliest 'state.' They thus satisfy their desire for cruelty in the larger sense, that being an "artist's cruelty" (2.18) or a "lust to mastery" (2.11): this is the pleasure in imposing one's will on something other, mastering over and imposing form on it.

As mentioned, Nietzsche also speaks of the soul in terms of a state analogy. Here, the *internalized* 'will to power' forcefully acts in a similar fashion as it does with the masters who direct it externally: one part of the soul seeks to take on the master role, dominating over and impressing form on the other parts. Were the slave powerful enough, he would express his 'will to power' as he pleased, overcoming his masters and enslaving them. As it is, however, the pain and fear are stronger than the desire to express outwardly the "instincts of freedom;" the slave desires to avoid further punishments and so he suppresses his natural inclinations, forcing himself to act in accordance with his master's orders. While much of the soul may be suffering from this psychic cruelty, the slave's aggressive drives receive at least some partial satisfaction.

An effect of this internalized cruelty is the emergence of the inner psychical world, of consciousness. Nietzsche uses a metaphor of two stretched membranes to describe this process (2.16). In the original condition, the inner world is the minimally thin space between these membranes. I am unsure what these membranes are supposed to represent, but they may be the different drives of the original soul, those "instincts of freedom." In his original condition, man relies wholly on these instincts; the most pressing or immediate of these would be followed, automatically supported by man's primitive rational capacities. There would thus be no sustained conflict between any of these drives – the 'membranes' are close together, expressing themselves towards similar ends. The inner space between these membranes is said to be minimal because these drives are directed outwardly, towards some immediate end, and so the focus of this animal is almost entirely on the external world. The minimal degree of conscious experience, the 'thin inner world,' is such things as hunger, thirst or other simple desires. When these desires are experienced, they are immediately acted upon and then forgotten. With nearly no internal conflict between its various parts, this original soul was simple but harmonious, directed to single, immediate ends.

Living free of any sustained external constraints, this 'human animal' remains simplistic; it will only develop when it is forced to do so. This occurs when man becomes enslaved and conflict develops between these different parts of the soul. One part seeks immediate expression of the natural drives, while another seeks to avoid the immense pain of the master's punishments. These parts struggle against each other for dominance, but as stated, the fear is stronger, and it dominates over the other desires. The aggressive drives push against these other parts, suppressing them and forcing the soul as a whole, the whole organism, to act according to the master's demands. Whereas before, man's focus was almost entirely outwards, he will now experience much inner turmoil because of these great conflicts within his soul. With this increased inner experience, his "inner world" will expand. Another part of the expansion of this "inner world" is the development of the rational capacities. As a result of the punishments, the slave no longer acts on his immediate instincts. Instead, he is forced to rely on his primitive rational capacities. He is "reduced to thinking, inferring, calculating, connecting cause and effect"; he must rely on his primitive "'consciousness'" (2.16). These rational capacities

develop with this increased reliance; man is forced to become "prudent," for example (cf. 2.15). With the growth of these capacities and increased level of consciousness, the slave would have an increased awareness of his inner psychical world and the tension he feels within it.

The inner psychical world was previously described as the minimally thin space between two membranes. The membranes, the different parts of the soul, come into conflict with each other. The force, the will to power, that was previously directed externally gets pushed back inward, pushing these membranes apart and thus expanding this internal space: "the entire inner word... has spread and unfolded, has taken on depth, breadth, height to the same extent that man's outward discharging has been *obstructed*" (2.16). This internal conflict forces man to advance. His soul grows but it loses its original harmony. Now, it is now conflicted, pushed in different directions as the various parts war amongst themselves, struggling for expression and dominance over the other parts. Nietzsche likens all of this conflict and psychic cruelty to a deep sickness, the "suffering of man *from man*, from *himself*" (2.16). The original bad conscience, this "animal soul turned against itself, taking sides against itself" is thus characterized as the discomfort attending a sickness.

This sickness of self-cruelty and conflict will reach its highest manifestation in the moral bad conscience, "the most terrible sickness that has thus far raged in man" (2.22). A comparison between the two forms of bad conscience cannot be offered until the moralization has been discussed. However, to try to minimize the alien appearance of this premoral bad conscience, it can be stated now that the modern, moral bad conscience is of a narrower form of bad conscience, focused entirely on the concept of guilt. The original bad conscience, on the other hand, is presented as a more general conflict in the soul, wherein the soul is driven to accord with any specified end. As has been discussed, this end is originally imposed by the masters. This is the typical case of the bad conscience, even in later stages of human association, when the relationship is not between masters and slaves but rather between different members of the community. The bad conscience is informed by externally imposed rules and customs, establishing certain ideal modes of behavior to which the individual's behavior must correspond. This is a process of 'socialization' that I previously discussed (in 2.3) whereby each individual is

made "necessary, uniform, like among like, regular, and accordingly predictable" (2.2). In terms of Nietzsche's political analogy of the soul, the part that fears and desires to avoid pain is what typically rules in the soul because of the aid of an 'external ally;' that is, should another part of the soul start to rule and lead the slave to act contrary to the master's demands, the pain imposed by the subsequent punishment will help the fearful part overcome and dominate the other parts of the soul. By means of these punishments, the rules are said to be burned into the slave's soul (2.3). The immense pain and the continuing threat makes these rules unforgettable; they become "fixed ideas," effectively taken out of competition from other ideas (2.3). This imposed, 'burned-in' form of memory is how man's natural forgetfulness was overcome.

While the bad conscience is almost always informed in this fashion by externally imposed ideas, there remains the possibility of exceptions. The soul might be directed to new ends, ends not introduced by external sources, but rather conceived of by the individual himself. The bad conscience itself, this conflicted, self-opposed soul, may become creative, giving birth to new ideals.

## The Creative Bad Conscience

### *The true womb of ideal and imaginative events*

The bad conscience has been presented as one part of the soul rejecting and suppressing the other parts. Nietzsche describes this psychic cruelty against the "entire old animal self" as: "This secret self-violation, this artists' cruelty, this pleasure in giving oneself ... a form, in burning into oneself a will, a critique, a contradiction, a contempt, a 'no'" (2.18). The emergence of the bad conscience led to the expansion of the inner psychical world, a potentially reflective realm of imagination and consciousness. Nietzsche refers to this expanded but conflicted soul, the "entire *active* 'bad conscience,'" as "the true womb of ideal and imaginative events" (2.18). This is because in this inner world, the continuous self-rejection gives rise to negative ideals. These ideals represent what is feared and forbidden, those ways that the soul may not express itself. These would seem to be the aforementioned "fixed ideas" 'burned' into the memory (2.3).

The creative step comes when these negative ideals are inverted, forming positive ideals based on what is considered the opposite of what is rejected. Put most simply, out of a 'No,' the idea of a 'Yes' emerges: in moving away from the forbidden, one conceives of something positive towards which one strives. With such an inversion, the bad conscience "finally brought to light [...] a wealth of new disconcerting beauty and affirmation" (2.18). This form of creating ideals out of negation will become most significant later in Nietzsche's discussion, when the inverted self-rejection by an extreme form of this bad conscience gives birth to the ideal of 'holy God' (cf. 2.22). This will be a key step in the moralization of the bad conscience as will be discussed below. In the present section, Nietzsche offers the example of the ideal of beauty as a form of this ideal creation through self-rejection. "For what would be beautiful if contradiction had not first come to consciousness of itself, if the ugly had not first said to itself 'I am ugly'?" As has been described, it is the slave who comes to this self-consciousness with the growth of his inner world and the awareness of the inner struggle. His bad conscience is an "uncanny and horrifying-pleasurable work of a soul compliant-conflicted with itself, that makes itself suffer out of pleasure in making-suffer."[85] As such, it is from the slaves that *these* ideals emerge.

Some critical comment must be offered on this form of value creation. In his discussion here, Nietzsche is treating self-rejection as if it were the only source of ideals. This is not the case, however, as is made clear by the first essay of the *Genealogy*. There, in his discussion of the creation of noble and slave moralities, Nietzsche identifies two other creative sources. Noble values are said to emerge directly from self-affirmation. The masters celebrate those qualities they see as being the source of their power; they deem these qualities 'good.' The concept of 'bad' is only subsequently derived from this positive concept, identifying what is weak, miserable, sickly (cf. 1.10-11). Slave values, on the other hand, are said to be born of the "ideal-creating, value-reshaping hate" (1.8) of *ressentiment* turned creative. When this occurs, the slavish person rejects and negates the characteristics of powerful men. The "value-establishing glance" is reversed by the

[85] The description of the conflicted, double-aspect of this soul is not as fully apparent in Kaufmann's translation, where he renders horrifying/pleasurable work (*entsetzlich-lustvolle Arbeit*) as a "dreadfully joyous labor" and the soul compliant/conflicted with itself (*sich selbst willig-zwiespältigen Seele*) as "a soul voluntarily at odds with itself."

resentful slave, saying "'No' to an 'outside,' to a 'different,' to a 'not-self'"; "*this* 'No' is its creative deed" (1.10). The noble concept of 'good' is thus inverted by the slave, being deemed 'evil.' From this, the opposite, that which lacks power, that which is not aggressive, is deemed to be 'good.' It would seem, then, that this creative *ressentiment* operates in a similar fashion as the creative bad conscience, but in the opposite direction: the bad conscience attacks and negates the self, projecting an inverted, positive ideal outwards, whereas *ressentiment* attacks and negates something external, internalizing the inverted, positive ideal.[86]

Of these other forms of value creation, noble affirmation becomes particularly relevant later on in the essay. The slaves are said eventually to take on their masters' values of "'good and bad'" (2.20). It is only later that they will invert these values. Again, the noble conception of 'good' is that which is seen as the source of the masters' power and happiness. It would seem that, at least in part, the slaves accept these values because they are naturally attracted to the masters' power and evident happiness – which is to say that strength is naturally valued over weakness. This attraction is significant, for, to return to the discussion of the creative bad conscience, ideals could be formed solely out of negation. Just as *ressentiment* is said to require first some positive sense of what is 'good,' so too would the creative bad conscience. The articulating of a negative ideal would seem to come from a more dialectical process in which one first has at least some crude sense of the positive. One might still focus on articulating the negative, but conceptual clarity would require contrast to the positive. For example, the slaves' new consciousness of themselves as ugly is likely to be at least partly an effect of their noticing the contrast between themselves and their masters. Unlike the slaves, the masters act as they please, pursuing their natural inclinations. So while the slaves might come to articulate an awareness of their ugliness, this depends on their having some natural

[86] That *ressentiment* and the bad conscience operate so similarly suggests that they have a common source. Like the bad conscience, *ressentiment* seems to come from the forced internalization of the active, aggressive drives that are in man. With the bad conscience, these are directed inwardly, against those inclinations and desires of the soul that lead one to be punished. In *ressentiment*, the cruelty is a reaction against the punishers themselves. The less powerful is envious and resentful of the more powerful, but he is impotent, unable to do anything about it. His rancor festers, but in some cases, a creative step is taken whereby he attacks his all-too-powerful enemies. This happens only in his imagination, of course, "in effigy" (1.10), but here he takes his revenge by undermining and devaluing the image of the powerful. From this he gains some petty sense of satisfaction and superiority.

attraction to what the masters deem 'good,' and thus a sensitivity to the beauty of their masters' freedom and power. Both the masters and the slaves have a natural attraction to what is whole, harmonious, and hence strong rather than to what is discordant, conflicted and hence weak.

Pointing out this implicit appreciation of what is positive is meant only to qualify the description of the creative bad conscience, not to reject it. The phenomenon of ideals coming from opposing and contradicting something does exist. Moreover, while this may involve some initial comparison to the masters, the *new* ideals that come from the slave rejecting himself might actually go beyond the masters' values. As Nietzsche says, "a wealth of new disconcerting beauty and affirmation" is brought into the world by the creative bad conscience (2.18).[87] The masters are more powerful than their slaves, but as well as being happy with their current situation (and thus less likely to look for improvement), they are also more primitive. They have not had the impetus to use and develop their rational capacities, nor has the bad conscience developed in them to the extent that it has in their slaves.[88] As such, their inner psychical world would remain quite minimal until they too are forced to develop their potential. Until then, the masters would affirm only what is most readily apparent, not moving beyond these simple conceptions. The slaves, by contrast, necessarily become more rational and self-conscious. The ideals

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[87] Of course, truly novel creations would certainly be quite rare. Some will be born with more strength and more will to power than others. In some cases, someone with an extreme level of this will to power will nevertheless be dominated by masters who are physically more powerful. If this person's will to power is repressed, he will be harsher on himself, and likewise, the inversions may be of greater magnitude, perhaps pushing beyond all previous ideals. Moreover, upon conceiving this new ideal, he would need enough will power to pursue it, holding it as higher than those ideals that are valued by either the masters or the slaves – and even by himself. (see, for example, Daybreak 9, 14 for instances of the self-torment entailed in an innovator trying to overcome his self-doubt in the face of past customs).

[88] This is to say that there would likely be some minimal level of this original bad conscience even in these masters. Nietzsche presents the bad conscience as emerging in a radical break from man's natural, uninhibited state. This serves to highlight the repressive nature and the self-cruelty involved in the bad conscience. However, even before the formation of the first 'state', Nietzsche describes men in groups, be they herds or hunting packs. In any group, some degree of restraint would be required. In the first essay, Nietzsche notes that the 'beasts of prey' men would strictly keep each other in limits, *inter pares*, "by mores, worship, custom, gratitude, still more by mutual surveillance, by jealousy..." (1.11). There might then be even here some form of the bad conscience in the necessary suppression of the aggressive drives. But it would be minimal, given that such 'beasts of prey' would readily be able to vent their drives attacking other tribes or beating their slaves.

This claim might seem to be countered by Nietzsche's statement in section 17 that it is not in these beast-of-prey men that the 'bad conscience' grows. In this passage, however, he is saying that these masters feel no guilt, no responsibility – i.e. the *moral* bad conscience is not in them nor does it emerge in them. Their minimal bad conscience would merely be the small degree of limited freedom and repression that they experience *inter pares*.

they give birth to will eventually be higher than the masters' simplistic conception of good. To the extent that the slaves would actually move towards these ideals, they would further improve beyond their masters.

Of course, living under the yoke of slavery, it is, to say the least, difficult to pursue any higher ideal. Some speculation can be offered, however, as to how such improvement could occur. Because of the cruel but constructive constraints of slavery, the slaves will become cleverer and more capable than their masters who simply pursue their more immediate – and largely habitual – inclinations.[89] At some point these slaves would be able to overcome their masters, enslaving them and probably other tribes as well – given at last the opportunity to express openly their cruelty, all the more capably than any before them. They could then pursue those ideals they earlier conceived. Having developed their consciousness and increased their reason, these new masters would not fully return to a complete reliance on instincts and immediate inclinations. With increased reason and imagination, more complicated customs and rules will develop (also due in part to the more complicated religious beliefs that will be developing), and so the masters themselves will require more self-restraint between themselves. Some level of the bad conscience, of internalized cruelty, will thereby remain in the former slaves who are now the masters. This bad conscience will grow as the community and its customs become more restrictive (cf. 2.11). The growth of the bad conscience will help advance mankind, for it will become an important part of nobler cultures; the "heroism and self-torture of the virtuous" (2.7) requires this internalized self-cruelty of the premoral bad conscience for the self-enforced suppression and striving of the soul to these new heights.

Because of the potential for actual growth and improvement in mankind that emerges with the bad conscience, Nietzsche gives praise to what he called a 'sickness.' The human animal now becomes a genuinely 'interesting animal' (cf. 1.6), an animal that

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[89] In defense of the beneficial effects of slavery, see *BGE* 188: "Slavery is, as it seems, both in the cruder and in the more subtle sense, the indispensable means of spiritual discipline and cultivation" and *JS* 377: "every strengthening and enhancement of the human type also involves a new kind of enslavement – doesn't it?". There are more subtle types of 'slavery,' constraints externally imposed by customs and laws, or self-imposed by one's own will. These constraints become important later on in man's development, but for savage men, even overt slavery can have beneficial effects. Though, 'beneficial' is judged by a standard only conceivable with the benefit of hindsight.

moves beyond what is simply given and becomes more than it was adapted to be.[90] Although tortured and conflicted, this animal now has the capacity to become something higher.[91] The "man of the bad conscience" thus "awakens for himself an interest, an anticipation, a hope, almost a certainty, as if with him something were announcing itself, something preparing itself, as if man were not a goal but only a path, an incident, a bridge, a great promise…" (2.16).[92] So, as contradictory and sick as this self-torturing animal soul may be, the bad conscience, this "true womb of ideal and imaginative events" (2.18) is also "*full of future*" (2.16). This potential future will be pointed towards at the end of the second essay.

First, however, having presented the character of this original form of the bad conscience, the question again emerges: how was this bad conscience transformed into the *moral* bad conscience, into the consciousness of guilt? As stated above, answering this requires first understanding the emergence of the concept of guilt, which Nietzsche says comes from the material concept of debt. This concept emerged in the original buyer-seller relationship, and it subsequently was transferred to the idea of a debtor-creditor relationship between the individual and his community (2.8). Nietzsche has yet to present a third form of this relationship, that between the individual and his god(s). It is only in this relationship that the consciousness of debt will be transformed into the consciousness of guilt. This moralization involves the consciousness of debt being 'pushed back' into the bad conscience in a peculiar way. In order to understand the change, however, the original debt-consciousness must be understood in terms of the premoral bad conscience that has just been presented.

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[90] Cf. 1.7: "Human history would be much too stupid an affair without the spirit/mind that has entered into it through the powerless.

[91] As noted in the commentary on 2.12, Nietzsche does not specify the standard of such 'advance' in the *Genealogy*. He does however point to an instance of what he claims is higher, the Sovereign Individual who will be discussed further in Chapter 12. This is an image of a higher form of nobility, far beyond the original, brutish 'beasts-of-prey' nobles. The conflicted soul that is the bad conscience is required for the development of this higher form of nobility. For example, it is present in the self-cruelty involved in 'the knower' (BGE 230). Also see BGE 257: the bad conscience and the expansion of the "inner world" seems related to Nietzsche's praise of the "mysterious pathos [of distance] … the craving for an ever new widening of distances within the soul itself, the development of ever higher, rare, more remote, further-stretching, more comprehensive states."

[92] Or as Zarathustra puts it, "Man is a rope, tied between beast and overman [….] What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not an end" (Z.p.4).

Chapter 7: Slaves, Lesser Powers and the Debt-Conscience

In the next sections (2.19-22), Nietzsche describes the process by which the "sickness" that is the bad conscience "has come to its most terrible and most sublime pinnacle" (2.19). This pinnacle is the moralized bad conscience, and it is said to come about in the realm of religious beliefs. In describing the individual's relation to his gods, Nietzsche returns to the debtor-creditor relationship. It is by means of a peculiar interaction of the bad conscience with a perceived *debt* to the god that the bad conscience is moralized such that it becomes *guilt*. Specifically, Nietzsche attributes this moralization to the "pushing" of the concepts of debt back into the bad conscience. These religious beliefs and the process of moralization will be discussed below, but first it must be noted that the moralization does not occur merely with the interaction of the concept of debt and the bad conscience. Indeed, such an interaction has come up earlier in the essay, in the discussion of the original debtor-creditor relationship. This original, non-moral interaction of the debt-consciousness and the bad conscience should be considered in light of the preceding interpretation of the original bad conscience. Such a consideration will facilitate understanding the premoral debt-relationship to the gods (2.19-20) and identifying the differences in the subsequent guilt-relationship to god (2.21-22) that led to the transformation of the earlier relationship.

The non-moral interaction of debt-consciousness and the bad conscience was first noted in section 5. There, Nietzsche described the debtor-creditor relationship and how the natural inclination towards forgetfulness must be overcome in the debtor so that he will fulfill his promise of future repayment. Otherwise the debtor will enjoy the present gain and forget about the inconvenient repayment required later on. As such, this relationship requires "*making* a memory for promises" (2.5). To 'make this memory,' the debtor promises that, should he fail to repay, the creditor may take from him something equivalent to the debt. Among the terrible consequences that the debtor might face, most notable was that the creditor could torture or cut from him an amount of flesh deemed equivalent to the debt. For the debtor, his dreadful promise is said to "impress repayment on his conscience as a duty, as an obligation" (2.5).[93]

[93] In summing up the moralization (2.21), Nietzsche says first that it is the pushing of the concepts of debt and duty into conscience, and a few sentences later says that it is the pushing of these concepts into the *bad*

The 'mnemotechnic' at work here in the debtor is quite similar to that described in the slave: in both, the fear of future torment overcomes forgetfulness, establishing a memory that is likened to an 'indigestible impression,' one that cannot be 'done away with' by the rest of the soul (2.1). In the case of the slave, he would be beaten whenever he followed his natural desires in going against the master's demands. All of this pain helps bring about the dominance of one part of the slave soul, some fearful part that seeks above all to avoid more pain. This part rules over the other parts, suppressing them and forcing the organism to conform to the master's orders. This conflicted soul is the original bad conscience at work. To apply the language that is used in the debtor-creditor relationship, the slave feels a need to carry out the master's orders, and this feeling might be called a 'duty' or 'obligation.' However, it is only in a prudential rather than moral sense: the slave is 'obliged' to carry out his master's orders (his 'duty') if he wants to avoid punishment. The 'duty' and 'obligation' that are impressed on the debtor's conscience seem to be of a similar psychic effect. In regards to the debtor, having received something from a creditor, he may be inclined simply to enjoy his present gains and ignore the inconvenience of later repayment. Such an inclination, however, is overcome by a sustained fear of the consequences of failing to repay the debt. The memory of this debt has been impressed on the bad conscience, establishing a sustained 'debt consciousness.' Associated with this is a desire to relieve that debt (a fearful feeling of 'duty' or 'obligation'). As with the slave, however, this is only a matter of prudence. This is not yet the 'consciousness of guilt' that is the moralized bad conscience; similar to the slave, the debtor is motivated by fear not by guilt.

While the bad conscience at work in both the slave and the debtor is similar, there are some obvious differences in their situations. For one, the slave is reacting to a situation imposed on him, internalizing his 'will to power' in a manner corresponding to the constraints of his master's 'will to power.' The debtor, on the other hand, freely enters

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conscience. So while Nietzsche claims in 2.4 that the debt is impressed on the conscience, I have followed his lead in treating the debtor's promise as impressing of debt onto bad conscience. The conscience and the bad conscience are merely inversions of each other; they are both informed by the same concerns or ideals. The real difference is between different *types* of bad conscience. There is the premoral bad conscience, which can also be divided into an active (creative) type or a reactive (socialized type) (2.18). There is also a moral type (2.22) and a noble type (2.2,24) that have yet to be discussed. The point of the current discussion is to identify the difference between the bad conscience as a consciousness of debt as opposed to a moral bad conscience, which is a consciousness of guilt.

an economic relationship and agrees to the terms; no necessity of doing so is imposed on him by the creditor. That said, even the debtor's compliance to repay requires the existence of an external threat, an outside force to bolster his own will to remember. This reactive will is in contrast to the actively sustained will characterizing the Sovereign Individual. Another significant difference is the scope of the debtor's conscience. His 'debt-consciousness,' along with the accompanying 'duty' and 'obligation,' are temporary, being tied to a single event (the repayment deadline). As such, they will disappear once the debt is paid. The slave's 'bad conscience,' on the other hand, is sustained across his lifetime, requiring continuous obedience and suppression of his own desires.

There is another debt relationship that has been described, however, one that would seem to include a bad conscience that is of a similar nature to the slave's sustained bad conscience; this is the relationship between the individual and his community as a whole. Nietzsche does not explicitly describe the role of the bad conscience here, but given that the bad conscience is supposed to be in all humans confined to society (2.16), that it is in the individual debtor, and that the debt relation to the community is supposed to be analogous the individual debtor-creditor relation, it would seem that it is acceptable to consider the bad conscience of the individual simply as a community member. This individual is likened to a debtor, who receives many benefits from being part of the community. Foremost among these is protection from injuries. But also included is being cared for and living in "trustfulness" (2.9), which among other things, might entail that contracts made between community members are enforced by the higher authority of the community. In exchange for these received benefits, the individual must obey the rules (be they customs or laws) of the community such as not injuring others or breaking contracts. Learning these rules, he learns what is considered "right" and "wrong" (2.11); should he break the rules, he will be punished.

The form of this punishment depends on what is required to make its members obey the rules. In early times, characterized by primitive people and an unstable community, the punishments are most harsh, entailing some form of torturous death or mutilation (2.3,9). These punishments would have a similar effect on the individual's bad conscience as they do with the slave or the economic debtor: much of the individual's

soul would be inclined to ignore the rules, but fearing the consequences, the individual, or more precisely, one part of his soul suppresses the other parts, ensuring that he complies with the rules of the community. As such, a memory for the rules is 'imposed,' overcoming natural forgetfulness.[94] This bad conscience is similar to both the slave's and the debtor's, in that it is merely prudential rather than moral. The compliance is based not on an active will but rather on the presence of the external threat of punishment. Unlike the debtor, but like the slave, this bad conscience will be sustained throughout the individual's life, requiring conformity to the community's rules. His 'debt' to the community is continuous: he receives continuous protection, and in turn, repayment entails continuous obedience to the rules.

Punishments in later, longer established communities are milder. From the 'creditor's' perspective (the collective understanding of the members of the community), this is because individual crimes are of less threat to the community itself. As such, a smaller punishment is deemed equivalent to the broken debt. Nietzsche does not explicitly identify why the individual requires less punishment, but several explanations are suggested elsewhere in the essay. For one, the community members become 'tame,' accustomed to the relative ease of communal life. As such, their souls become more tender (cf. 2.7: "the curve of human susceptibility to pain") so that even a small punishment could motivate them, whereas it would not have done so for coarser, more primal men. Another reason may be that in the social community, men have expanded their consciousness, their imagination, their rational capacities, with the result that gruesome spectacles of punishment are not required; individuals understand the threat and the need to obey rules without such vivid reminders. Whatever the case, punishments may be milder, but there is nothing in Nietzsche's description to suggest that the bad conscience is different in these members of the later communities. Like the earlier bad conscience, it is only based on prudential concerns: the individual avoids breaking the rules out of fear of the externally imposed consequences.

As I previously noted, one would think that there would be other concerns at work here as well, such as rewards in honor and status, but Nietzsche makes no mention of

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[94] 2.3: "with the aid of such images and procedures [the punishments] one finally remembers five or six 'I will nots,' in regard to which one had given one's *promise* so as to participate in the advantages of society"

such concerns (e.g. 2.14). Nietzsche has also avoided discussing the masters (2.5), or the motivation of those 'higher powers' who administer justice (2.11). It may be that these higher powers are influenced by pride, as suggested in the description of the Sovereign Individual (which will be returned to in Chapter 12). In regards to these slaves, debtors and community members, however, Nietzsche is focusing on a slavish *type* of individual.[95] It was in this individual that the bad conscience emerged (2.16). His only motivation for following rules is fear; though as mentioned in the previous chapter, this enables him to satisfy his desire for cruelty, albeit only on himself. In the first essay, it was from this type of individual that the moral concepts of 'good' and 'evil' emerged, and likewise, it will be this slavish individual who 'invents' the moral bad conscience (2.22). As mentioned above, this occurs at some point in the debt-relationship with the gods. In the previous instances of this debt relationship, the interaction of debt and the bad conscience amounts to a prudential debt-consciousness. On the basis of this interaction, this new form of the debtor-creditor relationship can be considered, as can the peculiar 'entanglement' of debt and bad conscience that eventually leads to the moralization of man.

[95] As I noted above, Nietzsche is not trying to account for political life as such. Thus, unlike Hobbes and Rousseau, he does not deal with the particular *problem* that pride (or *amour-propre*) presents to the political community. Instead, he abstracts a slave type, one who is not at all motivated by pride or shame but only by fear and the desire to satisfy repressed desires such as cruelty or vengeance. The focus on this slavish character allows for a clearer presentation of these affects. Such a focus is important because the later description of the moralization requires understanding the nature of these affects, particularly when they become dominant in a person's soul.

Chapter 8: (Sections 19-20) The Origins of Gods, The Individual-God Relationship

-19-

Nietzsche opens the section by again pointing to the potential that exists in the bad conscience. As he said before, it is a sickness, but he adds now that it is "a sickness as pregnancy is a sickness." He does not expand on this strange image, but the discussion in 2.24 suggests a possible 'child' that could emerge from this 'sickness.'[96] In regards to the bad conscience itself, Nietzsche proposes tracing its development through to its "most terrible and most sublime pinnacle." As will be seen, Nietzsche claims that the bad conscience has grown and transformed in relation to superstitious beliefs; it reaches its "most terrible and most sublime pinnacle" in the Christian notion of a guilt that pervades all of life: "guilt before God" (2.22). Rather than immediately looking at the very complex "entanglement of the *bad* conscience with the concept of god" (2.21), Nietzsche returns to an "earlier viewpoint" to consider the original, premoral relationship with gods, one that he claims could also be characterized as a debtor-creditor relationship.

This earlier viewpoint is that of the "original clan association" (which the next section suggests is an organization "according to blood relationships," that is, based around extended family). Out of what seems to be a natural superstitious predisposition, men believe that the spirits of their ancestors continue to exist in the present and have the power to affect the lives of men and the clan itself.[97] As with the individual's relationship to his community, Nietzsche claims that the debtor-creditor relationship is used to make sense of the relationship between the living generation and its ancestors – particularly the eldest ancestors, those "progenitors" who are seen as responsible for bringing the clan into being. The living generation thus feels indebted. Understanding their ancestors in terms of themselves, the living try to repay this debt with what they themselves value.

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[96] How can the bad conscience be seen as a pregnancy? It is a natural growth, one 'impregnated' by the cruel masters who initiated the process. It also seems to involve vulnerability: man's previous instinctive forgetfulness was described as a "form of strong health" (2.1). Nietzsche suggests that the process needs a midwife for it to be successfully brought to bear: only with the proper historical 'reinterpretation' can man be set on the proper path. Alternatively, man could be directed down a "path to nothingness" (2.11), which would represent an abortion of this potential birth.

[97] "But to those brutal and 'soul-poor' ages there is no 'for nothing'" (2.19). The belief in spirits and gods originates from an ignorance of causes ("man must first have learned to separate the necessary from the accidental occurrence, to think causally"; 2.1).

Initially this consists of food sacrifices, festivals, shrines and tributes. Above all else, however, the people believe that they must obey the "statutes and commands" that the spirits have passed on in the form of customs. This would seem to be what establishes the "ethic of custom" that was mentioned at the start of the essay (2.2); people feel a strict obligation to follow the set customs of their predecessors.[98]

The motivating factor behind this obedience is not gratitude or any other "sentimental obligation" (such as gratitude). Rather, as with the debt-relationships previously described, the motivation is *fear*: the living generation believes the ancestor-spirits will punish them if they do not offer repayment and follow the clan's customs. Any accidental misfortune would likely be interpreted as a deserved punishment, the result of the spirits' wrath – and to appease the spirits, to avoid further punishments, the members of the clan would take it unto themselves to punish those who broke the customs. And similarly, any and all 'good fortune' would be interpreted as coming from the ancestors – but as something that must be *repaid*.[99]

This debt, however, is never actually paid off because these spirits continue to use their powers to "bestow on the clan new benefits and advances." Some clans will become more powerful than others, standing "ever more victorious, independent, honored, feared." The clan's ancestor-spirits (who are an ever-increasing number) are believed to be the source of the earthly power and are thus themselves recognized as all the more powerful. The more powerful the clan, the more powerful the ancestor-spirits are believed to be. Accordingly, the spirits become ever more feared and the debt itself grows, requiring more from the living, such as mutilation and human sacrifice ("blood, human blood in any case").[100] On the other hand, those clans who become weaker lose

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[98] That this obedience of custom is based in superstition need not imply that there are no rational considerations behind the customs. These may indeed be 'time-proven' ways that benefit men (or the clan) and are thus encouraged by the elders. The typical example of this is the prohibition against eating pork because of the danger of worms and other diseases. One guided by the 'ethic of custom,' however, does not follow a practice because of rational consideration; there is simply a sentiment of the practice 'being right.' Indeed, even in later times when a custom no longer has any rational use (e.g. pork can now safely be eaten), people nevertheless follow such customs.

[99] In emphasizing fear, Nietzsche again points to the superior 'mnemotechnic' power of pain and fear (2.3). *Gifts* are quickly forgotten – but with fear, these people remember *debts* that must be repaid.

[100] Why would humans think their ancestors would desire such gruesome displays? The historical existence of such practices may be another piece of evidence for Nietzsche's "human, all-too human proposition" on the pleasures of cruelty (2.6): men themselves must see value, even pleasure in all of this mutilation and sacrifice.

faith in their ancestors, no longer fearing them and thus no longer feeling obliged to repay any debts. In the most powerful clans, however, their ancestor-spirits' power will seem ever more fearsome to them (and to others). Over time, their ancestors will be seen as so powerful that the understanding of them will eventually be transformed. Their power will be seen as so immense and so unimaginable that they are no longer regarded as mere human-spirits; they are now understood to be gods.

"Perhaps this is even the origin of gods, an origin therefore out of *fear*! ...", Nietzsche suggests. He takes up one objection to his "perhaps," one that is not so much against the naturalness of the account, but rather against the baseness of the people: their faith and obedience comes only from fear. The objector would like to believe that men acted out of piety for their gods. Nietzsche denies that such sentiments existed for the greatest part of man's existence, his 'pre-history.' He grants, however, that such piety may have existed in the "*middle* period" of history, when the "noble clans" developed. Piety, then, seems to be a form of gratitude, which is itself a sign of nobility. These noble clans paid back "with interest," giving the noble qualities they saw in themselves to their ancestors (now seeing them as *heroes* and gods). While the gods might *originate* from fear, Nietzsche thus suggests that there can be subsequent transformation; he will elaborate on this "aristocratizing and ennoblement of the gods" in 2.23. Such "ennoblement," however, is not to be understood as a "hallowing" of the gods, Nietzsche pointedly adds. This "hallowing" is another possible transformation, however, one that Nietzsche will consider in the following sections when he discusses the invention of the 'holy God.' It is with this type of god that that the bad conscience grows to its "most terrible and most sublime pinnacle."

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Thus, Nietzsche continues his account of the development of the "guilt consciousness" associated with the feeling of indebtedness to gods. A transition in the debt relationship begins when the community ceases to be "organized according to blood-relationships." The clan has grown in power, conquering others, acquiring slaves and serfs. Over time, these dependent populations *adapt* themselves to their masters' "cult of gods." Part of this adaptation entails copying all the customs and practices of the clan and

accepting the ruling standards such as the nobles' conception of 'good' and 'bad,' along with an inclination to recognize order of rank according to these standards. The 'transition' may be that because the slaves worship and sacrifice to the same gods, they become part of the people itself, albeit of the lowest rank. It should be noted, his is a curious development in the debtor-creditor relationship. The masters fear their gods but they also believe that their gods give them power. The slaves (or 'lesser powers') also feel that they have a debt to be repaid – but they receive nothing from the relationship. Indeed, the faithful slaves are neglected by the gods, inasmuch as the gods 'support' the masters. The effects of the slaves 'inheriting' their masters' gods will be described in the next two sections. But for the moment, Nietzsche only says that the inheritance "overflows in all directions."

Again focusing on the 'higher powers,' Nietzsche claims that over the millennia, the feeling of indebtedness to the gods continued to grow as the communities themselves grew in power and size. During this time, there are many wars and conflicts between the various communities. When one people is not simply enslaved by the other, there may be reconciliation and a gradual merging of the different peoples. As this occurs, the gods are also carried over into these larger communities, themselves believed to form a larger community of gods. Such "racial syntheses," then, lead to polytheistic religions. As despotisms arise, however, and thus overpower "the independent nobility,"[101] the way is prepared "for some form of monotheism." Under the despotism, there will be an increasing number of slaves. Perhaps living under a single, despotic ruler, the slaves are inclined to imagine a similar type of god: a single, all-powerful, all-punishing God.

Nietzsche does not explain this preparation, however. Instead, he turns to a god that emerged from the despotic Roman Empire: the Christian god, the "the maximum god attained thus far."[102] The rise of this maximum god brought with it the maximum feeling

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[101] The "independent nobility [*Adels*]" might be the old, established families who are remnants of the powerful clans that preceded the 'ethnic syntheses.' They would have more attachment to their ancestral gods, and would work to have respect for them maintained.

[102] What is curious about this account of Christianity is that Nietzsche only refers to despotism; he makes no mention of philosophy preparing the way for monotheism. In particular, he makes *no* mention of Plato. In contraast, in *BGE*, Nietzsche's calls Christianity "Platonism for the 'people'" (pref.). As will be seen, Nietzsche suggests three sources of the genesis of Christianity – but in none of them is Plato mentioned. I am unsure what to make of this absence. It is even made more noticeable in that in the 3rd essay, Nietzsche does describe Buddhism (another 'moralized religion') as being a popularized Indian philosophy (3.27).

of guilt/debt. Nietzsche does not draw attention to this but the Christian god is radically different than the previous ancestor-gods. The power of those gods was directly related to the power of the believers: according to that trajectory, the "maximum god attained thus far" should be the god of the most powerful people. The Christian god, however, emerged among a relatively small number of oppressed people, those lacking *any power*. Likewise, the ancestor-god was believed to give his followers power, making them ever more "victorious, independent, honored, feared" – but the Christian god provides no such earthly dominion. The belief in this maximum god, then, must have come about by some other means than the trajectory Nietzsche has previously presented.

In the next two sections, Nietzsche will describe the transformation that led to this new type of god; but for the remainder of the section, he returns to the trajectory suggested by the relationship between the power of the god and the debt believed to be owed to him. It should be similar with the Christian god and that maximum feeling of *guilt*. With the rise of modern atheism, the consciousness of guilt should disappear. Indeed, with the complete victory of atheism, Nietzsche suggests, mankind could be freed from this feeling of indebtedness to its origins and could thus return to a "state of innocence."

That might be the case if it were only a matter of belief in God. But as mentioned in section seven, man became moralized. As such, modern man cannot give up some of the aspects of that moral guilt. As will be seen, Christianity brought about a gloomy devaluation and rejection of this world. Despite the death of God, however, this rejection of earthly life lingers as does the feeling of guilt. A "state of innocence" is not the immediate result of the spread of atheism, but rather a growing nihilism and gloominess. In the next two sections, Nietzsche describes the emergence of this moralization.

## Chapter 9 (Sections 21-22): The Moralization of the Gods, the Moralization of Debt

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The preceding two sections have outlined the connection of the concepts 'debt' and 'duty' to "religious presuppositions" (2.21). Nietzsche admits that to this point in the essay, he has "intentionally left aside the moralization" of the concepts of "debt" and "duty."[103] This and the next section address this moralization, describing how debt transformed into guilt, thereby transforming the original bad conscience into the *moral* bad conscience, a consciousness of guilt (2.4). The moralization is summed up by two metaphors. The first is that these concepts of debt and duty are "pushed back into conscience." As stated above, this "conscience" seems to be an obverse-side of the "bad conscience," an interpretation supported by Nietzsche's restating the 'pushed back' metaphor a few sentences later, when he says that these concepts are "pushed back into *bad* conscience." The second metaphor of 'entanglement' is a clarification of the first, with Nietzsche claiming that, "more precisely," the moralization is the "entanglement of the *bad conscience* with the concept of god" (2.21). Making sense of these metaphors is essential to understanding the moralization process. A full interpretation of the process will not be offered until the commentary on the next section, for there Nietzsche discusses what is happening in this moralization ("One will already have guessed *what* actually happened with all of this and *under* all of this"; 2.22). Until then, what exactly the moralization *is* will remain unclear. With respect to the present section, I will highlight the effects that are described so that the next section can be explained, and an analysis of the moralization can be offered.

To begin with the first metaphor, that of debt and duty being 'pushed back' into the bad conscience, based on the above analysis of the previous debt relationships (Chapter 7), the interaction of debt, duty, and bad conscience is not enough to bring about the moralization of these individual factors. Debt was said to be pressed into the conscience in the economic relationship by fear of pain. A similar psychic event happens in the other debtor-creditor relationships, that of the individual to his community as well as to his ancestor-spirits/gods. So what is different about the particular combination of

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[103] Other translators have this as the moralization of "guilt" rather than "debt." The word is *Schuld*, which allows for both. I choose "debt" because Nietzsche has claimed that the concept of guilt emerges out of debt, and this seems to be the moment when debt takes on moral connotations and is understood as "guilt."

debt and bad conscience in the religious relationship with the Christian god? For one, the debt itself seems to be different. This new debt "pessimistically" closes off the "prospect of a conclusive redemption" – it is absolutely irredeemable. The religious debt to the ancestor-gods previously described never went away, but that is because the clan believed that it was continually receiving "new benefits and advances" (2.19). That debt was believed to be payable: it was continually being paid by means of sacrifices and obedience. The new *moral* debt also involves obedience; not to tribal customs, but to a new ideal, one wholly unconnected to the tribe's earthly power. As will be suggested below, this new ideal is the ascetic ideal. Secondly, this irredeemable debt has a peculiar effect on the debtor. As will be seen, the debt undermines his own value. His awareness of the debt and the desire to do whatever he can to pay it off *is* his bad conscience (his consciousness of guilt); this bad conscience "fixes itself firmly, eats into him, spreads out and grows like a polyp." The bad conscience grows with the concern over the debt, and when the debt is regarded as impossible to repay, a new idea is created. Substitute punishment had previously been associated with unpaid debts: one's suffering could supposedly repay the creditor.[104] With the idea of an *irredeemable* debt, a new idea is conceived of: "eternal punishment." The value of this debt to the god is absolute, for there is *nothing* that can be deemed equivalent to it, nothing can pay it back, not even an eternity suffering in hellfire. While there would obviously be tremendous fear over this prospect of "eternal punishment," having this debt of absolute value involves more than fear: the debt undermines the value of the debtor, convincing him of his "absolute unworthiness" (2.22). So how did this new form of debt emerge? The answer is suggested in the next part of the section, in the undermining of the 'creditor.'

The debt and duty are said to turn back on the creditor. What becomes apparent from this description is that there is actually a different creditor now; this is not the ancestor-god that was described in the previous sections. A transformation has occurred here, with the ancestor-god becoming a *moral* god – in 2.19, Nietzsche referred to this as the "hallowing" of the gods. This is how the Christian god emerged; and in this section,

[104] Cf. 2.6: "It was likewise here that the uncanny and perhaps now inextricable meshing of ideas, 'guilt/debt and suffering' was first knitted."

Nietzsche also indicates that the Jewish god is of this kind of origin as well.[105] God is distinguished from the original ancestor, Adam. The creation of this moral god and this moral debt will be described in the next section, but it is related to the other metaphor Nietzsche uses to clarify the moralization: the concept of God becomes 'entangled' with bad conscience, both being transformed by this entanglement.

Debt and duty, are said to turn back on the creditor, but not yet on God himself – the value of God is not undermined by this debt. Instead, this new god is understood to have created the original creditor; i.e. God is the creditor behind the original ancestor, nature, and existence itself. It is the original 'creditor' that is undermined: all of the earthly origins associated with man become repulsive such that believers try all the harder to dissociate themselves from these origins. Man's original ancestors are "burdened with a curse:" Adam's "original sin," for example, a curse carried on to all subsequent men. Nature itself is also "diabolized," now being regarded as *evil*[106] such that man's connection to nature constitutes yet another sin. Pope Innocent the Third's bemoaning of the "vileness of the matter out of which man develops" would be an instance of this (2.7). Thirdly, all of existence is devalued, becoming "*valueless in itself*." Man thus longs for something else, whether that be an afterworld ('Heaven') or, lacking that, he longs for nothingness. Buddhism is included here as another moralized religion, for its transcendent values also undermine the value of worldly existence.[107] In calling attention to this, Nietzsche makes it clear that the moralization of man and the undermining of his

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[105] In *The Antichrist*, Nietzsche claims that the Jewish god was transformed, becoming "denatured" and moralized (*A* 25). Originally, the god corresponded to the tribe and the tribes' strength, providing the tribe with its earthly victories. This corresponds with Nietzsche's description of the ancestor-god who is seen as responsible for the tribe's strength, power, independence &c. When the Jews were enslaved, however, faith in this god did *not* disappear as the tribal-strength, god-strength trajectory would suggest. Instead, God was transformed by "priestly agitators." Before, God's power was seen as the divine cause behind earthly effects. Now, an 'anti-natural' causality is suggested: despite all appearances, God does not favor the earthly powerful, but instead the weak and the miserable (cf. 1.7). The Daniel stories in the Old Testament are an example of this: God favors the weak rather than kings, granting power to his believers (such as to endure the flames of the furnace, or the den of lions).

[106] Nietzsche says that the "evil principle" is placed into nature. This is one more suggestion that moralization is not solely an effect of Christianity, for the concept of evil preceded Christianity. The creation of the concept of evil is described in the first essay of the *Genealogy* as a product of great *ressentiment*. This other aspect of moralization will be discussed below, after the role of the bad conscience has been identified.

[107] In 3.17, Nietzsche speaks of "the three greatest, otherwise so fundamentally moralized religions" (Christianity, Buddhism and Brahmanism).

earthly origins is not confined to Christianity – the significance is that the potential for 'moralization' is inherent in human nature; it is *not* a mere accident of history.

Other religions are also based on a moralized conception of god. What distinguishes Christianity, however, is that it brings about the most extreme level of this moralization by means of a "stroke of genius": debt and duty are turned back on the divine creditor, on God himself. Man's "debt" had become irredeemable such that he could not be redeemed by his own means or by *any* punishment. Thus, out of love for man, God, the creditor of this irredeemable debt took the debt onto himself, "exacting payment of himself" by sacrificing himself on the cross. This was the "paradoxical and horrifying remedy in which tortured humanity found temporary relief." God dying for man's sins: an odd form of mercy, to be sure (cf. 2.10) This relief is only temporary, however, because only at first does it seem that man is redeemed, that he no longer has this eternal debt. But the debt still exists: God still demands that man overcomes his earthly origins. Man still owes obedience to God's will. The debt actually grows, becoming all the more irredeemable, all the more unforgettable because of this gruesome sacrifice done *out of love*. Man cannot repay his debt, and this eats into him, undermining his own worth.

The next section discusses the motivation behind this peculiar interpretation of God on the part of the debtor. The impetus behind the interpretation is identified as the internalized cruelty that *is* the bad conscience. However, as I will discuss after addressing the moralization of 'debt', this Christian "stroke of genius" involves more than cruelty or even debt; the story of God's sacrifice is used to make sense of man's suffering and offer the *only* possible escape (the "secret machinery of salvation"; 2.7). This is another motivation that makes man accept this moralized God and his impossible commandments.

All of these issues raised, the question remains as to what the moralization actually is. How did God become transformed, and what is this new, absolutely irredeemable debt that emerged from this transformation? The next section offers *part* of the answer.

Nietzsche now offers an explanation of the moralization, outlining "*what* actually happened with all of this and *under* all of this" – the source is the bad conscience, that "true womb of ideal and imaginative events" (2.18). To be more precise, the source of the moralization is the *active*, creative bad conscience discussed above (2.18). The typical bad conscience is reactive, merely shaping itself according to externally imposed ideals. Struggling to conform oneself to these ideals requires much self-cruelty by one part of the soul forcefully suppressing and imposing its will onto the rest of the soul; this struggle still offers the peculiar pleasure of venting one's will to power, in this case venting one's aggressive drives on oneself. As was described in the commentary on section 18, the *active* bad conscience does not just conform to what is externally imposed, but can create and will new ideals. This is accomplished by means of self-negation which is inverted and projected outwards. Nietzsche's example of such creation was that, in rejecting oneself and deeming oneself ugly, the opposite ideal of the beautiful was conceived. Related to this was said to be the beauty and attraction to the self-cruelty entailed in such ideals as "*selflessness, self-denial, self-sacrifice*"; in short, *ascetic* ideals. This cruel attraction to self-rejection is behind the transformation of the older ancestor-gods. The gods are reinterpreted, conceived of as *the* god that demands *complete* self-denial – an ascetic god.[108] This is said to be the work of the "man of bad conscience" – he has "taken over the religious presupposition in order to drive his self-torture to its most gruesome severity and sharpness." To be sure, there are other motivations behind this reinterpretation and subsequent acceptance of this god – these other motivations are presented in the other essays, where they are treated as if they were the only motivations. These will be outlined below, but first, the role of the desire for self-cruelty must be discussed.

The "man of bad conscience" behind this transformation is the oppressed individual, the slave whose "will to torment" has been forced back inward.[109] The slave

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[108] This is not to say that the ascetic ideal must be this complete form of self-denial. As will be discussed below, there are *nobler* uses of the ascetic ideal: treating it as a means, one disciplines oneself in order to rise to greater power, to a higher form of self-satisfaction.

[109] In this section (unlike 2.16), Nietzsche says that this tortured slave "invented the bad conscience in order to cause himself pain after the *more natural* outlet for this *desire to cause pain* was blocked." This seems to violate his principle of historical method, that the purposes served should be kept separate from the cause of the origin of thing. Nietzsche criticizes claims such as, "the eye was made for seeing, the hand was made for grasping" (2.12) … yet here he says the bad conscience was made for inflicting pain on oneself.

has *taken over* the previous concept of the ancestor-gods, the gods of his masters.[110] As I pointed out above, the slave's initial relationship to these ancestor-gods is curious. These gods were believed to benefit the tribe, increasing its power, helping it become "ever more victorious, independent, honored, feared" (2.19). While the slaves may become part of the people, forming its lower class and thus benefiting from the gods' support of the clan, the primary beneficiaries are the masters or the higher class. The masters fear their gods, but they would also be glad of their preferential relationship. The oppressed, on the other hand, would have more reason to question the gods and the benefit they receive from the relationship. One of the few benefits these oppressed men actually have from the ancestor-gods would be the requirement for sacrifices and obedience. The gain is for that one part of the soul, the part that forces the rest of the soul to conform to these religious obligations; this dominating part gets to be cruel to the rest, forcefully suppressing and directing the other parts, disciplining the soul to conform to the gods' demands. At some

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Similarly, the "Christian stroke of genius" here is also being described as being invented for self-torment. 'Punishment was not invented for the sake of punishing' (2.13) – but a self-tormenting ideal was invented for the sake of self-torment? The main problem is that Nietzsche uses the language of inventing, whereas in 2.12, Nietzsche treats origins as given; the important issue is the subsequent reinterpretations. I am unsure if Nietzsche's wording is intended to do more than just make these historical developments seem all the more artificial – but in other sections, he does treat these developments as reinterpretations rather than inventions. The bad conscience, the redirecting of cruelty was the unintended consequence of enslavement (2.16); but it subsequently becomes a dominant, active force (2.18). Similarly with Christianity, it is more likely an event that happens but was subsequently reinterpreted to serve different ends. Echoing the first essay's account of the 'invention' of Christianity (the 'flowering' of revenge), Nietzsche's *The Antichrist* treats Christianity as having emerged with a positive teaching, but subsequently reinterpreted by the slavish Paul to serve his own desires for revenge. Again, I am unsure what this says about the origins, but the account of the current moral psychology and its effects in modern life, that is, in providing the underlying motivation for accepting these 'inventions' does not seem undermined.

[110] Or it could be when one of the formerly powerful falls in status and power, becoming oppressed, forced to suppress his drives (again, cf. A 25). This individual can be described as slave-like in his reaction to oppression, but obviously, he is more creative than most slaves. While Nietzsche does not explicitly mention the priest in this essay (as he does in the other two), there are several indications that it is the oppressed priest that is the source of this new interpretation of god (or the newly oppressed man who *becomes* a priest). Nietzsche suggests that the new innovation comes about in *reaction* to the "decline in faith" (2.20), that this reinterpretation of god is done in an "attempt to *reverse*" this decline, "or at least bring its movement to a standstill (2.21). The reinterpretation is made "in order to cut off the way out of this labyrinth of '*ideés fixes*' once and for all" (2.22). There is also the priestly language Nietzsche uses to describe the attempt to 'reverse this decline', three times pronouncing now shall (or now shalt; jetzt soll): "now *shalt* the prospect of a conclusive redemption once and for all pessimistically close itself off; now *shalt* the gaze bleakly deflect off, deflect back from the brazen impossibility; now *shalt* those concepts "debt" and "duty" turn themselves backwards…" (2.21)

This priestly reinterpretation may be motivated by the same desires that motivate the other believers: it might be out of a desire to wreak vengeance on those higher than him (1st essay); or it might be done to increase the self-tyrannizing required of him (2nd essay); or it might be an attempt to make sense of human suffering (3rd essay) – or it could be different, the priest exploits these emotions in an attempt to shore up his declining power over his flock ('the lust to mastery,' 2.11; cf. 3.15).

point, one of the oppressed men, one of the 'men of bad conscience,' comes to a different understanding of the gods and his relationship to them, an understanding that is more beneficial to him. This self-serving reinterpretation, skewed by his strong desires, is the idea of a god that demands of the believer the utmost in self-cruelty.[111] As will be discussed shortly, this is a very different god than the masters' gods. It is in this new religious relationship that the idea of religious debt changes; the new idea of god transforms the feeling of indebtedness into a feeling of guilt. With this feeling, the 'man of bad conscience' tortures himself over the idea of his "guilt before God." However, Nietzsche does not define this new feeling of 'guiltiness'; instead, his reader must come to understand it through the description of its effects and how these differ from the feelings of indebtedness. In a long sentence, Nietzsche lists how these new ideas of 'God' and 'guilt before God' are used for this extreme self-torture:

> In 'God,' [man] captures the most extreme opposites he can find to his actual and inescapable animal instincts; he reinterprets these animal instincts themselves as guilt before God (as hostility, rebellion, insurrection against the 'lord,' the 'father,' the primal ancestor and beginning of the world); he stretches himself on the contradiction 'God' and 'devil'; he takes all the 'No' he says to himself, to nature, naturalness, the facticity of his being and casts it out of himself as a 'Yes' as existing, corporeal, real, as God, as holiness of God, as judgeship of God, as executionership of God, as beyond, as eternity, as torture without end, as hell, as immeasurability of punishment and guilt.

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[111] This man interprets his gods based on satisfying some desire or drive of his. This implies that at least most men's entire metaphysical outlook may be a function of their more immediate passions, that the metaphysical order is meant to satisfy some desire; if it doesn't, that order is conveniently reinterpreted. Other such (re)interpretations could also be conceived of, e.g., a modern Christian who finds Biblical constraints too harsh, too demanding, and so he conveniently imagines God to be an easy-going liberal just like him. That this can happen seems manifestly evident. However, it need not imply that it is *necessarily* the case, or that all of man's beliefs are determined by his passions (or his background, or whatever else) – this may usually be the case, but there are exceptions in exceptional men, in those with strong wills: this issue will be discussed below in regards to the mistaken notion of 'free will' (in Chapter 12).

This 'holy God' is a radical transformation of the older ancestor-gods. The ancestor-gods were understood in human terms; they were believed to desire what humans desire and so they were offered various sacrifices, ranging from nourishment and tributes to cruel spectacles of human mutilation and execution. The 'holy God,' however, is conceived of in *opposition* to everything deemed earthly and human. The transformation comes from the bad conscience's creative inversion – this is the "entanglement of the *bad* conscience and the concept of god" spoken of in the previous section (2.21): all of man's self-rejection, all of the 'No' he says to himself is projected outwards as a 'yes,' as a positive ideal of holiness.

This transformed, "hallowed" god (2.19), the 'holy God,' he also has different demands. The older gods were believed to demand sacrifices and conformity to the old customs. While self-denial was required to the extent that one could not pursue one's more immediate inclinations, the self-denial was only instrumental to fulfilling these obligations. Moreover, earthly power and desires were by no means condemned; the gods were believed to be granting ever more power to the tribe, whereby the members' desires could be all the better satisfied. With this 'holy God,' however, self-denial, *absolute* self-denial *is* the obligation, the end to which man must conform. Being associated with the transcendent, with God's unerring judgment, an absolute standard is given to this ascetic ideal. It too becomes hallowed: an end-in-itself, a good-in-itself. With this different obligation, the nature of indebtedness to God changes. Man had previously believed himself to be in a constant debt-relation with his ancestor-gods: his tribe continually received benefits, growing ever more powerful with the debt itself commensurably growing ever larger. But nevertheless, man felt that he was appropriately repaying the gods through his sacrifices and obedience to the old ways. The debt to 'holy God' differs in that there is no conceivable way that it could be paid: the obligation is impossible, for man's natural instincts are "inescapable." If the command was to suppress the satisfaction of these instincts, to not act upon them, then some payment could be made. But this is not the case. Instead, merely *having* human instincts and desires constitutes a crime against God, a "hostility, rebellion, insurrection" – one cannot hide from the all-knowing God,

for he knows even one's thoughts.[112] This constant rebellion is called "guilt before God," but the full nature of this guilt is not yet revealed.

In the other debtor-creditor relationships, when a debt could not be repaid, the debtor was made to suffer to a degree considered equivalent to his debt, and so the debtor lived in fear of that retribution, fearing his creditor. While the believer does live in gloomy fear of the "executionership of God," there is no possible restitution for man's failure to the 'holy God.' God's commands are of *absolute value*, the obligation is unconditional: there is no possible substitute payment, not even eternal suffering in Hell. As stated, God's judgments are unerring and absolute, providing the transcendent standard for all evaluation; man can do nothing but accept this evaluation.[113]

Under this judgment of God, man is rendered worthless, living in constant failure of his religious duty; man feels his entire being to be *failure*. Nor is it simply the most obvious 'animal' temptations that are in him that are at 'fault.' Even those features that might naturally distinguish him from animals are condemned such as his capacity to evaluate (2.8) – man shall have no pride in these. They are condemned because they lead man astray, leading him to presume that he too can evaluate, making judgment on 'good' and 'evil.'[114] Along with rendering man worthless, all around him too, all of existence, everything natural and earthly is tainted, being condemned as the realm of the devil[115] (the "diabolizing of nature"; 2.21). Man is wracked by the contradiction of the 'holy God' and the 'devil,' for he is trapped in the devil's domain but feels compelled to become

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[112] E.g., Matthew 5:27-28: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

[113] In section 14, Nietzsche claimed that prior to a moral age, there was no conception of actions being condemnable in and of themselves. With this 'holy God' and his absolute judgments, all sorts of actions and desires become good-in-themselves or evil-in-themselves because the all-knowing God supposedly judges them to be that way. Acting against these judgments, *choosing* them is to reject God and his evaluation, to sin against God – this element of choice will be discussed below.

[114] E.g., I Corinthians 3:18-21: "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, HE TAKETH THE WISE IN THEIR OWN CRAIFTINESS. And again, THE LORD KNOWETH THE VAIN THOUGHTS OF THE WISE, THAT THEY ARE VAIN. Therefore let no man glory in men." Cf. Colossians 2.8.

[115] Cf. Matthew 4:8-9. Also, regarding need to reject world, e.g., I John 2:15-17: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

holy himself, to cease being a man and to become an 'angel' (cf. 2.7). Continually judged by the all-seeing, all-knowing God, man constantly feels his "absolute unworthiness."

In section seven, Nietzsche condemned the "diseased softening and moralization by which the creature 'man' finally learns to be ashamed of all of his instincts" (2.7). This aspect of moralization has been accomplished with the idea of 'holy God' and his absolute judgments against life and earthly matters. Man's sense of indebtedness has become associated with feelings of constant failure and utter worthlessness. These feelings of worthlessness are an important aspect of this sentiment of indebtedness becoming a sentiment of guilt. The original bad conscience is a dissatisfaction with oneself, an attempt to force oneself to be something different, to impose new form on one's soul. This "guilt before God" entails the ultimate dissatisfaction with oneself: one rejects oneself and struggles to conform to this impossible holy ideal. Terrible "psychic cruelty" emerges in response to this feeling of "absolute unworthiness."

All of this said, there is something missing from this account: there is great shame here, perhaps something found in Jewish morality, but there is a vindictive quality to Christian guilt that is not encompassed by this sense of shame and worthlessness. Up to this point, Nietzsche has presented this moralization as the effect of accepting absolute standards (hallowed by God's judgment) that in effect contradict life, nature, and power; standards, thus, that deem an individual to be an utter failure. The supposed motivation behind inventing (or accepting) these moral standards, behind becoming moral, is an extreme emotional excess, a "kind of madness of the will in psychic cruelty that has absolutely no equal" (2.22). The excess has been behind the repression of the aggressive drives, the creative bad conscience, the "hallowing" of the ancestor-gods, and the struggle to conform to the ascetic demands of this 'holy God." All of this is in partial answer to the question Nietzsche posed in section four: how did that gloomy thing, the consciousness of guilt, the entire bad conscience come into the world? The answer is not yet complete, however, for the present account of guilt is not yet enough: the sense of failure and shame is only *one* component of the sentiment of guilt. What is missing in the description of guilt so far is the notion of responsibility and blame, of *self-blame* in particular, such that the guilty one is believed *to deserve* punishment.

That the idea of responsibility is part of the moralization of 'debt' was indicated in section 14. There, Nietzsche claimed that for most of man's history, there was no notion of guiltiness regarding those who would be punished; rather, they were treated as an "irresponsible piece of fate"[116] and dealt with as such. Also, in section 4, where Nietzsche introduced the question of the origin of guilt, he claimed that "throughout the greatest part of human history, punishment was definitely *not* imposed *because* one held the evil-doer responsible for the deed, that is, *not* under the presupposition that only the guilty one is to be punished." The ideas of responsibility and of guilt seem to depend on the concept of intentionality, on the "presupposition of freedom [...] of the will" (2.4). The result is a *moral* perspective on punishment: "the criminal has earned his punishment *because* he could have acted otherwise" (2.4).[117] In the present section (22), the notions of intentionality and blame seem to be present: punishment and guilt are linked throughout the passage. Moreover, this "man of bad conscience" sees his "guilt before God" as "hostility, rebellion, insurrection" against the Lord. That is, his is not merely some passive fault; he is not merely some "irresponsible piece of fate." Rather, his fault is something *he* is responsible for, something *he* has *chosen*. However, while the idea of responsibility seems to be here, its source is not. If a necessary part of the moralization of debt is the idea of responsibility, how did this idea emerge?

As I noted at several points, the *Genealogy* artificially separates the different aspects of morality. Each essay highlights a particular psychological drive's role in constructing morality; each of these drives being some emotional excess that leads to the 'moral prejudice.' What is primarily on display in this essay is the active drive to cruelty being used to explain a most curious spectacle, that of the bad conscience, of a soul that turns against itself, cruelly attacking itself. While this desire is presented as being the force that motivates both the bad conscience as well as the transformation of the previous idea of god, it does not seem to have a role in the creation of the concept of intentionality. Indeed, Nietzsche suggests that the source of intentionality was philosophers, who

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[116] This is a humorous locution, seeing what is determined, fate, as being irresponsible, as if it *ought* to be otherwise. This need not be done, but it does seem that determinists often do just that, applying their doctrine only to the agent in question. In the case of a criminal, say, *he* is not held responsible or blameworthy. Rather, it is society or his parents – and quite often, the one who argues this will be indignant at those other sources, as if they could have done otherwise, as if they were not determined to do so as well.

[117] Cf. BGE 32, Nietzsche speaks of the "moral era" of mankind as being characterized by the idea of intentionality.

invented the idea as a gift to the spectator gods, as well as to "create a right to the idea that the interest of the gods in man, in human virtue, *could never be exhausted*" (2.7). While this account of the invention still seems most bizarre, what is clear is that it would lend itself to the moralization, to blaming oneself for one's failures and to torturing oneself all the more. Nietzsche does not say, however, that the "man of bad conscience" 'took over' this idea for his own ends.

The exploitation of this idea of free will is described in the first essay: there it is the work of the "man of *ressentiment*." The role of *ressentiment* in the creation of the *moral* bad conscience was hinted at in 2.11, where Nietzsche claimed that "the man of *ressentiment*" has the "invention of the 'bad conscience' on his conscience." This makes sense, for the "man of bad conscience" is motivated by the active affects: the desire to express one's power, to impose form and to inflict pain as an end in itself, even if that is only on oneself. The *moral* bad conscience and the response to guilt is more than a struggle to move towards holy ideals and to suppress all of one's desires. Rather, there is something vindictive with this moral bad conscience; it is an issue of deserved *self*-punishment. It is the "man of *ressentiment*" that is motivated by the reactive affects, such as hatred, rancor and vengeance. The moralization that has been described up to this point has been the work of the "man of bad conscience"; it is he who took over the religious presupposition in section 22. It would seem, however, that the active drive to cruelty can only explain one part of the moralization of the bad conscience – there are other sources and other motivations behind the process.

Up to this point, I have focused on the second essay itself, attempting to treat it as self-enclosed. I can no longer do so, for now the discussions of the other essays must be brought to bear. The discussion at hand is that of moralization; that is, taking the non-moral and transforming it into the moral. To understand the *moralization* of debt, the emergence of the *moral* concept of guilt and the *moral* bad conscience, I must necessarily explore what Nietzsche means by *morality*. This can only be done by examining the fuller account of moralization in the book as a whole. A full presentation of this is beyond the scope of this commentary, as that would first require an equally long consideration of each of the other essays. However, a relatively brief consideration of their role in the current essay can be offered based on hints that Nietzsche provides within the second

essay itself. While this will be brief, the discussion will nevertheless require a diversion from the course of the current essay since a fuller understanding of the process of moralization is necessary for the final sections of the second essay; those sections that deal with resisting moralization (2.23) and overcoming the effects of moralization (2.24).

## Chapter 10: Morality and the Guilt-Conscience

### 1. Other Sources of the Moralization

#### *i. Moralization out of Ressentiment*

The first essay of the *Genealogy* describes the role of *ressentiment* in the moralization of man. The meaning of the term *ressentiment* emerges contextually from Nietzsche's use of it, but put generally, the term represents a particular constellation of emotions, what Nietzsche calls the "reactive affects." These include such emotions as "hate, envy, ill will, suspicion, rancor, [and] revenge" (2.11). In the first essay, the focus is on *ressentiment* in the weak and oppressed – in a slavish type of man. These men resent their lowly status and they hate those higher than them. They envy the higher, seeing them as the source of their discontent and suffering. In particular, Nietzsche talks about priests who once ruled but subsequently fell in status, becoming ruled by physically stronger men: the "blond beasts of prey." These priests become vindictive, resenting their decline, hating their oppressors; but because they are impotent, these resentful ones cannot directly harm their oppressors. Their *ressentiment* festers, becoming poisonous,[118] and at some point the *ressentiment* becomes creative, inspiring new interpretations. The resentful one revaluates the one he hates, bringing that person down by devaluing him in his imagination. In typical cases, this is merely an unfair evaluation of the other person such seeing him in a negative light and suspecting low motives. In the case of the priest, however, his tremendous hatred and malice brought about an *inversion* of the masters' values and a reinterpretation of the gods.

The masters valued and deemed 'good' those qualities that were believed to be connected to their power. This 'good' included such qualities as health, strength, aggressiveness, pride, happiness, wealth – these values were based on an affirmation and celebration of themselves. The priest inverts this judgment, rejecting these men and their values, calling them 'evil.' These 'evil' qualities being condemned, those who lack these qualities are called 'good.' These 'good men' have such characteristics as meekness, humility, patience, passiveness. This tremendous "revaluation of all values" (1.8) inverts

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[118] Cf. HH 1.60: "*Revenge and the desire to revenge.* – To desire to revenge and then to carry out revenge means to be the victim of a vehement attack of fever, which then, however, passes: but to desire to revenge without possessing strength and courage to carry out revenge means to carry about a chronic illness, a poisoning of body and soul. …"

the natural standards of the masters; these new judgments of 'good' and 'evil' become absolute standards, hallowed by the belief that they are the judgment of God. Those 'good men' who are opposite of the masters – the weak, the suffering, the poor, the powerless – these men are said to be loved by God (1.7). The masters, on the other hand, are devalued: *they* are hated by God. Above, the 'man of bad conscience' was described as taking over of the previous religious ideas and conceiving of God in order to satisfy better his desire for self-cruelty. In this first essay of the *Genealogy*, the creation of the idea of God is done by the 'man of *ressentiment*' in order to satisfy better his thirst for revenge.

Nietzsche identifies this revaluation of the masters' values, this "*slave revolt in morality*" (1.7), as beginning with the oppressed Jews. This hatred and vengeance was not overturned by Christianity and its gospel of love, Nietzsche claims. Rather, Christianity is actually an outgrowth of the hatred: a secret effort to carry on the revolt against the masters and their values. The story of the "self-crucifixion of God *for the salvation of man*" is designed to lure men into accepting these slave values. Of course, those attracted to this 'bait' may be motivated by more than ressentiment or self-cruelty; they may be concerned about salvation and understanding their suffering. This other motivation will be discussed shortly, but first, the motivation of revenge must be further analyzed, for there is another step in the devaluation of the masters. This is the exploitation of the idea of 'free will.' With this idea, the masters can be *blamed* for what they are and do. They can be found 'guilty before God,' and as such, they deserve eternal punishment.

The idea of 'free will' is an invention, Nietzsche claims, a historical phenomenon arriving relatively late in human history. One element of this idea is the very concept of 'will' itself, a concept that man did not always identify. Prior to an idea of will, man was not seen as separate from his actions. He was a doer, defined by his deeds. The idea of will separates the doer from his deed. The doer is now seen as a separate "subject" (1.13), an indivisible atom (what is popularly called 'the soul') that precedes all action, causing the action by commanding it, by 'willing' it. One source of this error of seeing the subject as an atomic entity is simply that a single word is used for the 'soul.' But another source seems to be that the 'soul' is identified only with the consciousness (cf. 2.16: the "inner-

world" that developed, what man "later calls his 'soul'"). The will too is seen as a single thing, a commanding action that is also only felt to occur in the consciousness. Noticing no unconscious influences on the consciousness, the conscious will seems to appear spontaneously from nowhere but the consciousness itself. Because it is supposedly uninfluenced, the "subject" is thought to be neutral and the willing simply comes down to a choice in every situation by this unmoved mover, the "subject." In terms of good and evil, the teaching of free will claims that there is an "absolute spontaneity of man in good and evil" (2.7), as if all of one's 'nature' and past experience did not bear on this, actually making the subject anything but neutral.

The idea of free will and absolute neutrality is exploited by the men of *ressentiment*. The concept of a neutral "subject" helps reinforce the notion of equality: all 'souls' are equally free to choose what to do. Weak men congratulate themselves on their choice to be 'good;' they choose to be meek and humble, avoiding any kind of violence or retaliation. This is convenient for them, as they praise themselves for not doing those things they would be too weak to do. These men also use the idea of free will to further condemn those who are naturally powerful, those who have been deemed 'evil': they are further condemned because they are free to be good but instead they *choose* to be evil, consciously rejecting what is deemed as 'good.' The weak believe that the strong should become weak. Nietzsche describes this as a "demand of strength that it *not* express itself as strength, that it *not* be a desire to overwhelm, a desire to cast down, a desire to become lord, a thirst for enemies and resistances and triumphs" (1.13).[119] The men of *ressentiment* do not notice any problems in their belief in the intentionality of the absolutely neutral subject. They accept the idea and use it to judge powerful men as blameworthy because they chose 'evil' and thus deserve punishment since they could have chosen to act otherwise (cf. 2.4).

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[119] All of this said, there are many ways of expressing strength, one of which is self-control. In terms of the 'bad conscience' described in the 2nd essay, one strong drive can rule over the rest of the soul, expressing its strength by suppressing the other drives thereby disciplining the soul. The weak, on the other hand, would be more dominated by external stimuli, not having the 'strength of will' (i.e. strong enough drives) to resist their environment.

Nietzsche's criticism of the idea of 'free will' needs to be qualified, and it is important to note that he is not arguing for the opposite, for 'unfree will.' Instead, for Nietzsche, it is precisely a matter of strength, a question is about "*strong* and *weak* wills" (BGE 21). I will expand on this in Chapter 12 when I discuss the Sovereign Individual, the 'master of a free will.'

Of course, this equation of guilt and punishment is itself a complex issue. Why does one who *chooses* 'evil' *deserve* to be punished? What purpose would such punishment serve? In terms of these men of *ressentiment* who believe that a person's choice is absolutely spontaneous, punishment cannot legitimately be said to teach or deter him: that would grant that he is not spontaneous, that his choice is influenced by his past experiences which have shaped him, thus, he may not be to blame for what he thought was good. In this case of the believer in spontaneous choice, this person is trying to satisfy his vindictive feelings. Perhaps he is offended by the sight of the evil-doer's actions, or perhaps he is even physically injured. In both cases, because of his own pain, he wants the evil-doer to suffer. Section 2.4 suggests that the original impetus towards punishment is that of revenge, "from anger over an injury suffered, which is vented on the agent of the injury."[120] It seems that the implication of Nietzsche's presentation is that all punishment that is based only on the moral notion of 'guilt as intentionality' is inspired by *ressentiment*, by the spirit of vengeance.[121] That is, this desire for punishment is not a matter of justice, but rather an attempt to "hallow *revenge* under the name of *justice*" (2.11; 1.14). This call for *just deserts* is a matter of the vengeful "thirst to be *hangmen*" (3.14), 'to make others suffer *because* they have made *me* suffer.'[122]

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[120] Even if the person is not directly injured, reactive affects could be at work in his motivation to see the other person punished. The evil-doer might have attacked something the person loves or cherishes, what is *his*, and so he wants the evil-doer to suffer for that injury. Or perhaps out of spite, the person does not like that the evil-doer chooses differently than him; that choice belittles his own choice, attacking his principles and judging them as flawed. Or out of ill will, seeing a person pursue earthly gains and enjoy those without remorse, the 'good man' might want this evil-doer to suffer so the 'good man' is shown that the evil-doer's choice is wrong (and that his own is right). In all of these cases, the person desiring for the other to be punished is concerned with the pain that he suffered and he wants the other to suffer for that.

[121] Nietzsche also speaks of this 'great error' in Twilight of the Idols (TI: Errors 7). There, free will is said to be invented "essentially for the purpose of punishment, that is, because one wanted to impute guilt." Again, this invention seems to be motivated by the spirit of vengeance, by the desire to make others suffer because their actions are displeasing, insulting or somehow harming. Nietzsche says that 'we immoralists' must overcome these concepts of guilt and punishment, to remove them from the world. It seems to me that he means that it is the pairing of the two that must be overcome. His teaching might be more radical than this, that all punishment must be overcome… but that does not seem to me to be the case, at least based on my analysis of sections eleven and thirteen of this second essay – there are rational reasons for punishing people.

[122] In contrast to this desire for vengeance is the work of the just man (as rare and strange as he is; 2.11). Even under personal injury and scorn, he overcomes or resists these reactive feelings, not letting them shape his judgment. This man is actively committed to the idea of objective and fair evaluation. Though, again, Nietzsche does not specify these reasons. Perhaps this just man sees the slavish character of the reactive affects, how letting them rule is allowing the external force to shape one's character. Having one's judgment being skewed by the other is weak and ugly to the noble man (1.10), and would be shameful to

That said, there are rational grounds for punishment that are independent of any notions of 'guilt' or 'intention.' If the evildoer does choose, not spontaneously but based on past experience, the punishment may inform his choice to avoid the action others deem 'evil.' He might even still see it as good but not worth the risk of suffering. Even if the 'evildoer' were wholly 'unfree' in his choice, punishment may be necessary for deterrence or safety, to 'improve' (but cf. 2.15) or at least temper him. Vengeance will still be a concern in that most will not overcome the desire for revenge and so punishment is also necessary in part to deal with the citizen's reactive affects so that these do not become destructive of communal life. One might not *desire* the suffering or harm of others, but still see the necessity of the punishment and suffering.

The man of *ressentiment*'s only concern with blame is with its associated idea of revenge. Should these men still be enslaved, impotent to punish the evil ones, they use their idea of God to satisfy their vengeance. As stated above, the process of moralization involves the establishment of absolute standards of good and evil. This is done by conceiving of an all-knowing God who makes such judgments. In the description of "guilt before God" in 2.22, failing to heed God's commands was called "a hostility, rebellion, insurrection against the 'lord'". With the idea of intentionality, the evil-doer is seen to *choose* to do evil, aware of but rejecting God's judgments and thus rejecting God. This God is believed to be all-powerful and vengeful. The weak cannot punish these 'evil' strong ones, but God will punish them for rejecting him and his judgments. The believers of this story thus satisfy their desires for vengeance, imagining that 'evil' men will suffer for an eternity in hell (cf. 1.15, Tertullian's rapture over the suffering that awaits the evil).

From this *ressentiment*, the moral notion of guilt has been developed, such that the moral man can blame others for being evil and see them as deserving punishment. But this is still a matter of blaming others. The notion of guilt has to be turned back on the person himself, such that he blames himself for his failures to live up to God's demands – he must blame himself for his "guilt before God." Nietzsche describes how this self-

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the Sovereign Individual, the master over himself and 'master of a free will' (2.2). His is a strong, active will, not to be ruled by these intervening affects caused by others.

blame emerged in the third essay, where he appeals to a different aspect of psychology, the desperate need to understand and relieve one's suffering.

*ii. Moralization out of the response to suffering*

Up to this point, I have described the connection of *ressentiment* with the idea of guilt as blame as it is presented in the first essay of the *Genealogy*. For the discussion of the moralization of bad conscience to be brought to completion, it must be seen how this guilt was directed inward such that it became *self*-blame. With this development, guilt takes on new meaning, for guilt as self-blame involves a particular state of soul, a psychological response to guilt that goes beyond mere identification (i.e. labeling oneself as 'guilty'). To offer a brief review, it should first be recalled that in section 2.14, Nietzsche claims that this 'guilty feeling' did not always exist. It came into being at some point in history; the question of what this psychological response is and where it came from is the guiding question of the second essay of the *Genealogy*. Self-cruelty (the internalization of the *active* drive to cruelty) was insufficient to account for the full feeling of this guilt. It accounted for the extreme displeasure and shame at oneself, the desire to be something else (even if only 'innocent' or 'redeemed'), but not for the particularly punitive aspect of the moral bad conscience. This part of the feeling of guilt, a *reaction* to identifying oneself as guilty, involves a different part of psychology, that of *ressentiment*; not at others as was described in the first essay, but *ressentiment* directed inwardly. One's hatred, rancor and vengeance must be turned back on oneself. How this step in the moralization of man was accomplished is discussed in the third essay.

Thus, each of the essays of the *Genealogy* present the particular contribution of a single aspect of human psychology to the creation of morality and the subsequent motivation to accept morality. The first essay focused on the psychology of *ressentiment*, the second on cruelty, and the third essay on a third psychological factor: the response to suffering.[123] While this suffering includes specific, acute instances of pain, Nietzsche focuses on the chronic suffering of those who lack power of any sort, be it external power

[123] Specifically, Nietzsche focuses on the need to alleviate and understand *one's own* suffering. Compassion, the affect that Nietzsche rarely names in the *Genealogy* but notes as being predominant in modern morality (cf. pref. 6) may be part of this response to suffering. Compassion is literally a 'with feeling' others (German, *Mitleid*: a 'with-pain'); one suffers with others, and so in a way one is still responding to one's own suffering and trying to alleviate it in some way.

over others or vital energy within themselves. Because of this lack, they suffer from varying degrees of depression, listlessness or even despair. As will become important, another part of this suffering is the tension involved in the conflicted soul, the 'sickness' of the original bad conscience: this exists in all people placed under some higher power such that they cannot externally express their aggressive drives. Nietzsche identifies these sickly men, the "physiologically failed and out of sorts," as the "*majority* of mortals" (3.1). The third essay provides several answers to the question, "What do ascetic ideals mean?" The pertinent answer depends upon the type of person who accepts the ideal (e.g., an artist, a priest, a philosopher). But for present purposes, I will focus only on what it means for this "majority of mortals" who are suffering: for them, the ascetic ideal has served to alleviate their suffering, and moreover, it has served to draw such men back to life, reinvigorating them and their affects.[124]

Of particular relevance to the current discussion on the moralization of guilt is that one of the responses to suffering is *ressentiment*.[125] Nietzsche offers a "surmise" as to the "true physiological cause" of this *ressentiment*: "every sufferer instinctively seeks a cause for his suffering; still more precisely, a perpetrator, still more specifically, a *guilty* perpetrator who is receptive to suffering" (3.15).[126] Upon this perceived source, the sufferer vents his reactive affects (anger, hatred, rancor, and so on) for the physiological purpose of bringing about an "*anesthetization of pain through affect*." In blaming and attacking someone, the sufferer forgets about his own pain and misery, focusing instead

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[124] When applied to all of these types of people, the larger psychological aspect at work is the desire to will ('for man would rather will nothingness than not will at all'; 3.1, 28). This desire to express a will is the 'will to power,' and it is underneath the different psychological factors in each essay. For instance, the larger sense of cruelty is that it is a desire to impose will, to cause an effect and dominate over something (2.18); inflicting pain is simply the most immediate reflection of this (2.6). *Ressentiment*, on the other hand, is a particular reaction against a power/force imposed on one: being unable to overcome that force, it attempts to undermine the stronger force such that one can enjoy some feeling of superiority.

[125] In the third essay, other psychological impulses such as *ressentiment* and cruelty are relegated to a secondary importance: these affects are pursued, but in order to alleviate one's suffering or at least to distract one from it. However, in the first and second essays, these impulses are of primary importance, being the creative impetus behind the idea of a vengeful God and the ascetic demands of a holy God. (Indeed, in the 2nd essay, the ascetic ideal emerges only from self-cruelty.)

[126] The desire to find 'a cause, a perpetrator or better, a guilty perpetrator,' represent progressive levels of response. Nietzsche has at several points claimed that the notion of guilt was not in more primitive men: they would identify the cause of their injury, vent their anger on it (2.4), and accordingly be distracted from their initial pain. The 'cause' that is identified may be another person, or even an animal, but the immediate response of anger might apply even to inanimate objects that are identified as a cause of pain, such as when one runs into a door and gets angry at it.

on these feelings of *ressentiment* and on relieving them by harming the other person, be that "in deed" (directly hurting the other person), or "in effigy" (through the petty satisfaction of slandering the other person, perhaps to others, or perhaps even only in one's own imagination; 3.15, cf. 1.11). In terms of this sickly "*majority*" of men, those who suffer from life, their suffering cannot be immediately attributed to "a *guilty* perpetrator," and so their *ressentiment* will be all the greater. As Nietzsche pointed out in the second essay, "What actually arouses indignation against suffering is not suffering in itself, but rather the senselessness of suffering" (2.7; cf. 3.28). Suffering from life, these 'sickly men' will resent life and resent any who seem to have a better life – anyone who does not seem as miserable as they are, anyone who seems strong, healthy and happy ('why can't I be happy? why do they get to be happy? how *dare* they be happy!'). These sufferers will try to make these others miserable, so that the sufferers can momentarily forget their own depression and also remove one source of their pain: namely, the image of the strong and healthy ones that reminds these resentful ones of their powerlessness (cf. 3.14). Such *ressentiment* will obviously be dangerous to the community, spreading hatred, malice and suspicion throughout it, turning the community members against each other.

This *ressentiment* must be dealt with before it destroys the community. The ascetic priest,[127] attempting to protect his community (those who believe in his god) attempts to deal with this dangerous affect. Nietzsche here offers some rare praise to the priest for his ability to "discharge this explosive" *ressentiment* and thus save the community – this action is the priest's "true feat, also his supreme usefulness" (3.15). The priest saves the community by redirecting the *ressentiment* of each sufferer, such that it turns back on the sufferer himself. "'That's right, my sheep!" he says to the sufferer,

[127] As mentioned, the ascetic ideal has different meanings for different types of people. For priests, Nietzsche calls it "their best tool of power, also the most 'high' permission to power" (3.1). The self-denial of the priest is most impressive, displaying a great deal of power over himself. This can attract others to him, mystified by that power and perhaps longing for it themselves. He thus gains power over the masses of suffering people, but possibly also over the 'beasts of prey' masters as well who are attracted to his power, or the power behind him (cf. 3.15; BGE 51). As to where the ascetic ideal itself came from, Nietzsche does not name a single, original source; e.g. it may have been an attempt to dull the affects to deal with one's suffering (3.18), or an element of active self-cruelty (2.18), or something that for some other reason was required of their priestly duties (1.6), such as their attention to the gods leading to less active work. Were Nietzsche being less polemical, he might also raise nobler sources of the ascetic ideal such as the feeling of victory over insistent impulses: the ascetic ideal as a means, as a will and a way to ever greater power.

"Someone must be to blame for [your suffering]: but you yourself are this someone, you alone are to blame for it – *you alone are to blame for yourself!*" (3.15). The sufferer who believes this comes to blame himself for his own suffering – he identifies himself as the "*guilty* perpetrator".[128]

To convince the sufferers and bring about this redirection of *ressentiment*, the priest creates such concepts as "'guilt,' 'sin,' 'sinfulness,' 'corruption,' [and] 'damnation'" (3.16). Nietzsche first outlines the effects of this redirection, describing how believers try to overcome this feeling of self-blame by redeeming themselves through another of the priest's suggestions, namely, by pursuing the ascetic ideal (3.17-19). This will be discussed in a moment, but of most immediate relevance is that, in 3.20, Nietzsche refers back to the second essay to explain how the ascetic priest accomplished this project: the priest exploited the "*feeling of debt*" towards the gods.[129] As was discussed in sections 2.19-20, the people of early tribes believed they had a debt to their ancestor-gods because these gods supposedly use their powers to aid the tribe, increasing its power. However, these gods could not have been of much use in making sense of individual suffering, for the gods were believed to benefit or punish the tribe *as a whole*. Even if the tribe were doing well, individual members could still be suffering from some source of depression, be it from weakness, low status, or the premoral bad conscience. As the tribe grew (such as when the "slaves and serf populations" came to believe in the

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[128] This is not the only means of redirected *ressentiment*. In 2.11, Nietzsche outlined another attempt to deal with *ressentiment*: a relatively safe release of ressentiment by blaming others, namely, criminals for the suffering in the community. The people who accept this direct their reactive energies into a drive for justice, thus protecting the community both from criminals and from their own destructive affects. Priests may have had some role in this redirection as well, given that most often laws are informed by religious code or they are at least ratified by divine sanction.

[129] Nietzsche again plays on the ambiguity of *Schuld*. For several reasons, I read this passage as 'debt.' The primary reason is that Nietzsche is again discussing the *origins* of Christianity, with the moral emerging from the premoral – the events of 2.22 cover one aspect of that origin, that of the need for self-cruelty and this passage covers another aspect, that of the need to understand one's suffering. More specifically, Nietzsche talks about the *Schuld*-feeling "in the raw state," that is, before it was later transformed, becoming moral. The priest would have been responsible for organizing ceremonies and sacrifices, for managing the 'debt-relationship' with the ancestor-gods – and so the priest, even in premoral societies would be the "true artist of the feeling of debt." As will be seen, only subsequently does this feeling of debt get transformed into a moral concept: the priest gives it *new* form, such that the feeling associated with this moral debt (guilt) is connected to the idea of "sin." Another reason for seeing this as the pre-moral sense of *Schuld* is that Nietzsche is also discussing the premoral bad conscience. Nietzsche even uses the same image of an animal beating itself on its cage (cf. 2.16), but this time, rather than discussing the bad conscience as the desperate attempt to be able to be cruel, even if only on oneself, Nietzsche focuses on the response to the suffering and confinement, the desire to understand the reason for it. It is only after the reinterpretation of debt into sin that this bad conscience becomes a moral bad conscience.

gods, 2.20), the higher classes would still believe they benefited from their ancestor-gods, but there would be increasingly more believers who suffered from their life but with no account of why they suffered – the sufferers would probably blame those of a higher status, but they might also wonder why their gods would allow for this suffering in the believers, in those who obeyed the gods' customs and sacrificed to them. The ascetic priest gives a new account of the gods and of life that makes sense of each individual's particular suffering. In presenting this reinterpretation of the gods, Nietzsche offers a third account of the transformation of the gods.[130] This time, it is not through the desire for vengeance, or for self-cruelty; rather, it is to make sense of human suffering.[131]

The priest tells a story of an all-knowing, all-powerful god who created two worlds, this one and another that awaits after death. This otherworldly existence and everything associated with it is absolutely valuable, the 'good-in-itself,' in light of which one's commitment to earthly existence must be abandoned; this life is valueless except as a means of preparing for the next life ("life is held to be a bridge for that other existence"; 3.11).[132] The people already have a feeling of debt to their gods as well as a desire to pay it off. The priest exploits this, leading them to a new understanding of their debt: they are required to follow the ascetic ideal, rejecting everything *enjoyable* in this life – after all, they are not allowed suicide – an ideal they cannot *perfectly* fulfill. Those who fail to repay their debt through the pursuit of the ascetic ideal – which is more-or-less everyone – are made to suffer. The suffering of each individual is thus made sense of in terms of

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[130] Nietzsche hinted at this source of the gods in 2.7: "So that concealed, undiscovered, unwitnessed suffering could be banished from the world and honestly negated, one was almost compelled back then to invent gods and intermediate beings of all heights and depths, in short, something that also roams in secret, that also sees in the dark, and that does not easily let an interesting painful spectacle escape it."

[131] This might be the first inkling of the philosophical impulse: the attempt to 'make sense of' everything. One of the larger but subtler questions of the book has to do with 'the knower.' Nietzsche opens the book with the question of the self-knowledge of the knower. Similarly, he opens the 3rd essay with an aphorism that seemingly has nothing to do with the essay itself (but cf. 3.7-10) – but it too bears on the knower. The moral psychology concentrates on the slavish type of individual and his motivation for accepting morality… but some of that psychology might also be meant to hint at something about the knower. For instance, self-cruelty is hinted as being part of the intellectual conscience (2.6, 11; BGE 230). The response to suffering is described in part as indignation *and* a need to understand. Rather than getting angry like some sort of beaten dog, the knower concentrates on understanding. *Ressentiment* seems to be something presented so that it can be recognized and purged… and perhaps also so that the knower can better understand the lower aspects of himself (cf. BGE 26).

[132] The "good-in-itself," that supposedly disastrous Platonic invention (BGE pref.) … but in the *Genealogy*'s account of moralization, there is no mention of Plato, or of philosophy preparing the way for such anti-natural morality. I am unsure of what to make of this curious absence, given its prevalence in BGE.

the unpaid debt. Each sufferer can identify the 'cause' of his particular suffering as his own failure: "he is to seek it in *himself*, in a *debt*, in a piece of the past, he is to understand his suffering itself as a *state of punishment*" (3.20).

Through this reinterpretation, the religious beliefs became 'moralized.' More will be said about what this 'moralization' means in terms of the whole essay, but for the moment, the important aspect is that everything in this world is now made sense of in terms of the transcendent standard of the other world described by the priest. Moreover, this new standard is effectively the ascetic ideal, requiring self-denial and self-sacrifice as a preparation for the next world. The religion teaches that human suffering is a result of the human failure to correspond to the otherworldly standard. Among such "moralized religions," Nietzsche includes Brahmanism and Buddhism. The focus of these religions is not so much on blaming oneself but on correcting the past errors, seeking eventual redemption through asceticism: by rejecting and forgetting oneself, one will move closer to a final state, a state that might simply be nothingness, the "*absence of suffering*" (3.17).[133] Along with a hypnotic self-forgetting and dulling of the senses, other ascetic practices also help to mask one's suffering by such methods as distraction through mechanical activity (e.g., daily rituals; 3.18), or by requiring believers to be charitable, which Nietzsche says offers a small sense of superiority, a sense that the charitable ones are at least better off than those others who require charity (3.18).

While there are other moralized religions, the one Nietzsche focuses on is Christianity. It too employs ascetic practices in these milder ways to mask the believers' suffering, but what distinguishes it is that it brings about the maximum feeling of guilt and fear in order to deal with the suffering of its believers. Aspects of this Christian guilt have already been outlined in the commentary on section 22: man's origins are tainted with the idea of original sin, and in contrast to this is the ideal of the 'holy God.' The result is that by merely possessing the "inescapable animal instincts," man feels that he is continually offending God. These instincts are reinterpreted such that they are believed to constitute "sin," and in not eliminating them, man believes himself to be guilty of a

[133] Nietzsche does not explicitly speak of the ideas of karma or reincarnation, but they would fit well into his account of religion as a means of making sense of suffering. The oppressed and lowly, those who suffer in this life suffer because of their actions in the last life. They need to repay the gods, paying back with 'karma' and by doing so, they will improve their lot in the next life, gradually moving towards final redemption.

"hostility, rebellion, insurrection against the 'lord'" (2.22) – he believes his life consists of "guilt before God" (2.22). Man understands this all as a crime because he believes he could overcome these instincts if he willed it hard enough, if he chose with purity of heart; in failing to do so, he feels that he has intentionally chosen otherwise, to nurture these evil instincts – thus, he believes that he has chosen evil. As discussed in section 2.21, the Christian's feeling of guilt is all the more extreme because he believes that God sacrificed himself for the salvation of man (cf. 1.8); man merely has to choose to accept God and follow his will, but he fails to do so and so a feeling of utmost guilt pervades his entire life. However, despite man's flaws and failures, he does have the hope for a better afterlife, hope that through his suffering, he will be forgiven his sins (the "entire secret salvation machinery" of Christianity; 2.7). He thus embraces the Christian teaching, accepting his guilt; moreover, he might even welcome his suffering now, seeing it as deserved and hoping that it will lead him to eventual redemption.

In the third essay, Nietzsche describes the development of these religious ideas of sinfulness and punishment in order to offer an account of how the ascetic ideal spread throughout mankind, but all of the discussion bears on the guiding question of the second essay that was presented in section 2.4: how was it that the bad conscience became moralized such that it became the *moral* bad conscience, equated with the consciousness of guilt? The response to suffering's role in this moralization is summed up by the purpose the ascetic ideal for sufferers: "*The ascetic ideal serving an intent to produce emotional excess*" (3.20). The "ascetic doctrine of sin" produces the emotional excess of *ressentiment*. Rather than being directed outwards, as it was described in the first essay, it is turned back on the individual himself. Man comes to believe that God has commanded him to reject all of his nature; in failing to do so, man sees himself as having chosen what has been condemned by God, what has been deemed 'evil' by God's judgment (nature has been 'diabolized'; 2.21). The individual thus blames himself for his suffering; his *ressentiment* is internalized with all his hatred, rancor and vengeance being directed back at himself. This self-blame contributes to the formation of the *moral* bad conscience. It is no longer only self-cruelty. Recognizing his "guilt before God," the individual despises himself and he welcomes his suffering as deserved punishment, even calling for more of it. As Nietzsche puts it at the end of the *Genealogy*, this commitment to the ascetic ideal

"brought new suffering with it, deeper, more inward, more poisonous, gnawing more at life: it brought all suffering under the perspective of guilt…" (3.28).

In 2.21, the moralization of debt was said to turn the debt back on the debtor. This is what has happened with the idea of sin: failing to repay the religious debt, the individual blames himself for his suffering, and he focuses on the idea of his sin to such a degree that it bears on his entire character – the only thing that matters about him is that he is "a sinner" (3.20).[134] His sinfulness, his belief in his "guilt before God," would constantly be in his consciousness, fueling the soul-conflict that is the original bad conscience, with one part of the soul (deemed the soul itself, the 'eternal, indivisible soul,' surrounded by all the 'bodily' temptations) attempting to dominate over all the rest of the soul, continually trying to eliminate those natural drives and inclinations (the "inescapable animal instincts") that the individual has learned are 'sinful' and 'evil.' The self-hating 'sinner' embraces the inner-torment of this bad conscience, feeling himself punished, "breaking himself on the cruel wheels of a restless, diseased-lascivious conscience" (3.20). His bad conscience thus grows to terrible new levels, spreading such that it attacks all parts of his soul, eating into him like a "polyp" (2.21). The pervasiveness, the ferocity, the persistency of this self-torment over one's "guilt before God" makes it so that man associates the suffering from his bad conscience with the consciousness of guilt, equating the two of them. This narrow focus of the bad conscience solely on such ideas these moral ideas of guilt, sin and evil – *this is the moral bad conscience.*

2. What is Moralization?

Answering the question of how the bad conscience was made moral has required a consideration of all three essays of the *Genealogy*. However, this answer has covered more than just the moralization of the bad conscience; it has also necessarily included other instances of moralization, such as the moralization of debt into guilt and three different accounts of the moralization of the gods. From all of these individual cases of

[134] Nietzsche says that with this reinterpretation, with this invention of the idea of sin, the believer is like a "hen around whom a line has been drawn. He can no longer get out of this circle of lines: out of the invalid 'the sinner' has been made…" (3.20). Nietzsche also uses this image in *Zarathustra* in describing "The Pale Criminal" (Z.1.6) – the criminal sees his own guilt and he forgets everything else about himself, thinking of himself only as the doer of that one guilty deed.

moralization, some observations can be offered as to what Nietzsche means by 'morality' and what it is about it that he is attacking in his polemic.

It is not just the fixed standards of evaluation and commands of morality that Nietzsche is attacking; these existed prior to 'moralization,' such as in the demands of the 'ethic of custom.' What characterizes the moralization, the establishment of morality, is that the particular standard of evaluation is effectively a manifestation of the ascetic ideal being treated as the highest good, as an '*end-in-itself*.' The result is that selflessness and self-denial are treated as 'goods-in-themselves,' whereas whatever is believed to be rooted in nature is 'condemnable-in-itself.' This standard of evaluation is absolute: what is 'good-in-itself' can have no touch of the bad or evil. As such, it is not permissible to try to redirect or sublimate the natural passions; they must be eliminated altogether.[135] Moreover, the judgment is unconditional; there are no exceptions such as cases in which selfishness would be considered a virtue or selflessness a fault – the moral standard applies to all equally.[136] The 'morality' that Nietzsche is attacking is one that is fundamentally opposed to life and to nature. As will be discussed below, this is not the only possibility for morality as such; a natural morality is conceivable, one that supports life and the life instincts. The ascetic ideal of self-denial could even be involved in this morality, not as an end-in-itself, but as a means to support the growth of greater power, the expansion of life. This is a "noble morality," in contrast to the slavish morality that emerges from the oppressed and suffering, those who reject life in favor of another. In

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[135] The person attempts to eliminate these drives, but as Nietzsche points out in 2.7, it might only seem that the drives have disappeared when they actually become subtler, being satisfied by seemingly innocent ends. Nietzsche calls this the "hypocritical conscience," pursuing desires such as for cruelty but pretending that end has nothing to do with the pleasure in cruelty (Nietzsche gives the example of the enjoyment of tragedies). This "subtilization" is an accidental effect of the suppression, but it can lead to "sublimation," a refinement of the spirit, making it more complex, beneficial and discriminating. This being a polemic, Nietzsche focuses primarily on the faults of morality, and particular Christian morality. In *BGE*, Nietzsche is still primarily critical, but he does give more credit to some of the effects of Christianity (e.g. BGE 61). Through the forced repression, Nietzsche claims, a drive learns to "*purify* and *intensify* itself." One of these effects occurred under the force of "Christian value judgments": it was only from these, Nietzsche claims, that the "sexual drive sublimated itself into love (*amour-passion*)" (BGE 189).

[136] Being opposed to life, these absolute, unconditional standards are also outside of life and its necessary perspectivity (cf. 3.12; *BGE*, pref.); the standards are instead based on some imaginary standpoint from which one can speak of something as 'good-in-itself' or as a 'thing-in-itself.' However, as stated, Nietzsche does not take issue with this because it is an error (an error could serve life) but because it is pernicious to life. Cf. EH:D.7: "Christian morality—the most malignant form of the will to lie, the real Circe of humanity—that which *corrupted* humanity. It is *not* error as error that horrifies me at this sight [...] it is the lack of nature, it is the utterly gruesome fact that *antinature* itself received the highest honors as morality and was fixed over humanity as law and categorical imperative."

this polemical work, Nietzsche seems to be attacking all morality, but his target is the 'anti-natural' morality[137] that today seems to be the only type (for this is how it treats itself, and most people only recognize morality as something based in the ascetic-ideal). Moreover, it is Christian morality in particular that is most directly attacked; this is because it is the most powerful form of 'anti-natural' morality (and, as will be discussed in a moment, its effects linger in modern morality); but as pointed out earlier, there are other moralized religions that also treat the ascetic ideal as an 'end-in-itself.'

That different instances of this type of morality could emerge independently of each other indicates that there may be a *natural* inclination in man towards such 'anti-natural' morality. This is Nietzsche's suggestion, for he presents morality as emerging under the impetus of underlying psychological impulses (man's "unnatural inclinations"; 2.24). These psychological impulses are of primary importance, for inasmuch as morality may originally be based in particular religious beliefs, this depends first on the gods being made moral. This moralization comes about by self-serving reinterpretations of the gods; the new understanding of the gods provides the opportunity to express otherwise repressed or unsatisfied drives. In the three accounts of the moralization of the gods, the gods were made moral in order to satisfy man's desire for vengeance (the "slave revolt in morality"); or to satisfy man's desire to be cruel, even if only to himself; or to meet the desire to see a meaning, *any* meaning, behind human suffering.[138] While the gods may be moralized because of these impulses, the new gods in turn exacerbate these impulses. By satisfying and giving them freer rein, these impulses grow, taking on tremendous proportions, such as self-cruelty being driven to its "most gruesome severity and sharpness" with the creation of "holy God" (2.22). The three affects Nietzsche presents as

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[137] Nietzsche uses this term in *Twilight of the Idols* (TI:Morality as Anti-Nature, 4): "*Anti-natural* morality—that is, almost every morality which has so far been taught, revered and preached—turns, conversely, *against* the instincts of life: it is *condemnation* of these instincts, now secret, now outspoken and impudent. When it says, 'God looks at the heart,' it says No to both the lowest and the highest desires of life, and posits God as the *enemy of life*."

[138] The transformation of the concept of the gods under the force of these psychological impulses provides an example of Nietzsche's "point on historical method" (2.12): "something that has somehow or other come into being is again and again interpreted according to new views, monopolized in a new way, transformed and rearranged for a new use by a power superior to it." New form and function is given to that previous 'something' such that it better serves the higher power. When providing examples of where this could happen, Nietzsche includes the possibility of it occurring in a "religious cult." The gods supposedly develop out of a primitive belief in spirits, but this "religious presupposition" is taken over, given new form and meaning in order to satisfy these repressed emotions.

leading to this moralization are not meant to be exhaustive, but they provide instances (and at least in the first two cases, rather shocking, decisively *immoral* instances) of what motivates men to accept and support morality.[139] As mentioned in the introduction, other psychological impulses could be seen at work as well; Nietzsche explicitly mentions 'the herd instinct' (postcard to Overbeck; cf. 3.18). Other affects could also be seen as motivations driving these theological/metaphysical reinterpretations. Fear of death or hope, for instance, or perhaps a desire for justice (people desire an "ethical world order and ethical final intentions" such that everything will 'work out' for the best; 3.27 quoting JS 357).

3. From Religious Morality to Secular Morality to Nihilism

This is not to say, however, that 'anti-natural' morality is only to be found in religions.[140] Indeed, it was with the problem of *secular* 'anti-natural' morality that Nietzsche brought up the issue of moralization. In 2.20, Nietzsche proposed a trajectory: the Christian god, the maximum god thus far attained had also brought about the highest feeling of guilt; now, with the "unstoppable decline of faith in the Christian god," so too should the feeling of guilt disappear such that man returns to a new state of innocence. However, as Nietzsche points out in 2.21:"the facts of the case diverge from this in a terrible manner." Even without faith in God, the moral categories and sentiments continue to have power over man. In part this may be because once morality is accepted by a people, its effects continue to be passed on to later generations (at least for a time). Another part is that, just as Nietzsche describes the initial moralization of debt and duty as an attempt to reverse or at least halt the decline in belief in the gods (2.21), so too

[139] Early on in the *Genealogy*, Nietzsche sums up the guiding purpose of the book: "My thoughts on the origins of our moral prejudices – for that is what this polemic is about..." (pref. 2). Cf. BGE 187: "moralities are also merely a *sign language of the affects*."

[140] Indeed, Nietzsche also suggests that the moral impetus to political movements can be motivated by such sentiments. Cf. TI:Skirmishes.34: "Whether one charges one's misfortune to others or to oneself—the socialist does the former; the Christian, for example, the latter—really makes no difference. The common and, let us add, the unworthy, thing is that it is supposed to be somebody's fault that one is suffering; in short, that the sufferer prescribes the honey of revenge for himself against his suffering. The objects of this need for revenge, as a need for pleasure, are mere occasions: everywhere the sufferer finds occasions for satisfying his little revenge. If he is a Christian—to repeat it once more—he finds them in himself. The Christian and the anarchist are both decadents. When the Christian condemns, slanders and besmirches 'the world,' his instinct is the same as that which prompts the socialist worker to condemn, slander and besmirch *society*. The 'last judgment' is the sweet comfort of revenge—the revolution, which the socialist worker also awaits, but conceived as a little farther off."

might there have been an attempt at remoralization so that even without the belief in God, the effects of morality could continue (such that people would continue to avoid socially destructive behavior). Specifically, Nietzsche views the works of Kant, and to some degree, Schopenhauer, as contributing to such remoralization.[141] The combined effects of lingering Christian sentiments and active attempts to defend these have established a form of secular morality that contains most of the features of Christian morality: modern people still have faith in some form of "ethical world order" and fixed standards of 'good' and 'evil' (or if 'evil' is too outdated, 'immoral' takes its place).[142] Egalitarianism continues, not under the eyes of God, but each person still is of equal worth, having inherent value, innate *rights*; no one can be anything but an 'end-in-itself.' Moreover, this morality continues to have at its foundation a form of the ascetic ideal, which is still treated as an 'end-in-itself.' From this, absolute, unconditional standards are maintained such that selflessness (e.g. 'good will,' the 'unegoistic') is treated as a 'good-in-itself' (perhaps the only true good), and anything that involves the slightest self-interest (the 'egoistic') has the tinge of being immoral. Above all else, the absolute value of compassion is unquestioned.[143]

The suggestion of Nietzsche's presentation of 'anti-natural' morality is that modern morality continues to have power over men because the concepts, whatever their source, continue to appeal to the same emotional excesses that previously gave rise to and supported morality. Some examples can serve to illustrate how this may be the case. Firstly, in terms of *ressentiment*, the egalitarianism of modern democratic morality is

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[141] Not knowing the works of either of these philosophers sufficiently well, I cannot assess whether their works actually lend themselves to such secular moralization (and if so, whether this was an intentional effort). However, it is fairly clear that Nietzsche does see this as the effect of Kant and Schopenhauer. For example, Nietzsche criticizes Kant's efforts as giving license to all manner of transcendentalisms (3.25). Nietzsche's criticism of Kant is even more pointed in the *AntiChrist*: "A path had been found on which one could sneak back to the old ideal. The conception of a '*true world*,' the conception of morality as the *essence* of the world (these two most malignant errors of all time!), were once again, thanks to a wily and shrewd skepticism, if not provable, at least no longer *refutable*. Reason, the *right* of reason, does not extend that far. Reality had been reduced to mere 'appearance,' and a mendaciously fabricated world, the world of being, was honored as reality. Kant's success is merely a theologian's success" (A 10).

[142] Even if people do not believe in 'God,' they have a sentiment that inclines them to believing in "some alleged spider of purpose and morality behind the great snare-web of causality" (3.9).

[143] Along with his praise of the ascetic ideal, Schopenhauer's particular contribution to secular morality is his support of compassion: "the value of the unegoistic, of the instincts of compassion, self-denial, self-sacrifice, precisely the instincts that Schopenhauer had gilded, deified, and made otherworldly until finally they alone were left for him as the 'values in themselves,' on the basis of which he *said* '*no*' to life, also to himself." In contrast, Kant held compassion in "low regard" (pref.5).

attractive as it continues to make all people equivalent, reducing the superior to mere equals. Also, even secular moral categories are of use to the spirit of *ressentiment* because they allow for a feeling of superiority over others whom one might otherwise envy. In this vein, Nietzsche describes the petty pleasures of the "moral 'self-gratifier'" who would otherwise be indifferent to morality except that it gives him the opportunity for sanctimonious preaching and "'righteous' defamation" of those he could not otherwise harm (3.14). Likewise, the suppression and self-denial required by the ascetic ideals of modern morality continue to appeal to the desire for self-cruelty (cf. 2.18), and one feels guilty in failing to live up fully to these ideals. In terms of the desire for understanding suffering, secular morality does not provide much assistance,[144] and so human suffering now seems utterly senseless. As such, compassion, the desire to prevent suffering in *anyone* (or *anything*), takes on an even greater value than before. Suffering that is caused by human sources is all the more condemned, and one thus feels guilty about one's aggressive drives (again satisfying one's desire for cruelty and also turning one's *ressentiment* inwards). The self-blame at work here is not as harsh as the self-flagellation over the idea of "guilt before God," but nevertheless, guilt continues to find some way of being expressed, albeit in a more diffuse form, such as in the guilty feeling about the state of the world (*Weltschmerz*, 3.17; what we might call 'liberal guilt').

The problem is that secular morality, based solely on human ('all-too-human') reasoning, does not evoke the same powerful faith and fear as does the morality based on the supposed judgments of an all-knowing, all-powerful god. The underlying 'moral impulses' are only partially satisfied, such as by a weaker, more diffuse feeling of guilt, or are wholly unsatisfied, such as the desire for a meaning of life and its suffering. This secular morality is not as powerful, nor is it as sustainable as religious morality: without the faith in a transcendent god, this morality much more quickly succumbs to doubt and disbelief. Towards the end of the third essay, Nietzsche outlines the inherent problem of eventual doubt in 'anti-natural' moralities, which are ultimately based in faith on some

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[144] The notion of a progressive movement of history (e.g., Kant's argument in his *Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose*) might offer some meaning to the human suffering of the past and present, namely, that it is in the name of an improved future. This only accounts for suffering in general, of a people or of mankind. Unlike the "entire secret salvation machinery" of Christianity, it does not give an account of each individuals particular suffering and thus does not offer the same satisfaction to individual's who long to understand their suffering.

other- or anti-worldly standard. The problem, Nietzsche claims, is that the ascetic ideal entails a *faith* in the *value* of truth, such that truth too is held to be an absolute 'good-in-itself' The value of truth is considered 'inassessable' and 'uncriticizable' (3.24, 25). The commitment to pursuing this truth eventually undermines belief in transcendent meanings; one cannot believe in any fixed values or ideals. The discoveries of modern science for example, such as those of Copernicus and Darwin, effectively accomplish the ascetic aim of self-denial and even self-contempt: man sees himself as just another animal, having no special status, value, or meaning, and this leads to a "'*penetrating* feeling of nothingness'" (3.25). This path to nihilism is not an historical accident based on the rise of modern science, Nietzsche argues. Rather, it is an inherent problem, as demonstrated by the similar but independent course of development to nihilism in Indian philosophy and Buddhism. Because of this trajectory, Nietzsche predicts that "morality will gradually *perish*" (3.27) and, if nothing is done, morality will be replaced by some form of nihilism.

This nihilism might take the form of despair over the meaninglessness of life, such as the 'weak pessimism' pointed to in section 2.7: "The tired pessimistic glance, the mistrust toward the riddle of life, the icy 'no' of disgust at life."[145] Here the affects are still strong, especially the desire for a meaning of suffering, but having no direction for release, they become destructive, leading to *ressentiment* at life and existence, to utter self-contempt, and "suicidal nihilism" (3.28). This nihilistic despair is obviously a horrific condition for an individual to be in, but at least the drives and longing for something higher still exist; such people could possibly be led to higher paths if they were given proper direction. What is worse is that the nihilism may lead to a desire to release all constraints and tension, a desire to "let ourselves go" (2.24). Here the affects and longing for anything high or noble have grown weak.[146] In part this may occur as the people become tamer, more used to social life ("domesticated;" 2.7), guided not so much by an active concern with morality as by a passive reliance on habit. Related to this is

[145] Schopenhauer is one such pessimist, teaching that the only hope for salvation is the denial of the will, to will not at all (cf. 3.28). Nietzsche refers to this as a 'new Buddhism... a new Buddhism for Europeans" (P.5).

[146] Cf. 1.12: "We can see nothing today that wants to grow greater, we suspect that things will continue to go down, down, to become thinner, more good-natured, more prudent, more comfortable, more mediocre, more indifferent..."

that, as mentioned above, the moralizing impulses gave rise to morality but they were exacerbated by the commitment to moral beliefs. With the declining belief and reliance on morality, these impulses receive less and less satisfaction, growing ever weaker. They may finally 'wither' away in those raised in the amoral culture.[147]

The result is that, whereas previously man desperately longed for something higher, directing his will beyond himself, even if that was outside of life, this more frightening nihilism is the "wretched contentment" of the last man described in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Z.p.3), longing for nothing higher in life than petty pleasures and entertainment. "Alas, the time is coming when man will no longer shoot the arrow of his longing beyond man, and the string of his bow will have forgotten how to whir!" (Z.p.5). This metaphor of tension is also used in the preface of *Beyond Good and Evil*, where Nietzsche speaks of the "magnificent tension of the spirit"; this tension, felt as a "state of distress," could be utilized to direct man to new heights: "with so tense a bow, one can now shoot for the most distant targets." In terms used in the *Genealogy*, the development of the bad conscience (the soul turned against itself) was described as a sickness (2.16), but one "*full of future*." With it, the human animal had the possibility of directing himself to new ends; man "awakens for himself an interest, an anticipation, a hope, almost a certainty, as if with him something were announcing itself, something preparing itself, as if man were not a goal but only a path, an incident, a bridge, a great promise..." (2.16). Or as *Zarathustra* puts it, "Man is a rope, tied between beast and Overman [....] What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not an end" (Z.p.4). With the moralization of man and the longing for the holiness of God, this sickness grew to tremendous levels as man tortured himself trying to reach that goal and punishing himself for failing. This longing has potential, if it could be directed away from anti-natural ends of previous morality towards new, healthier ends. Nietzsche calls the sickness of bad conscience "a sickness as pregnancy is a sickness" (2.19). It is a growth by natural processes (initiated by the moralizing impulses of the 'man of ressentiment,' the 'man of bad conscience,' the ascetic priest) that could lead to a new, and hopefully improved life; that is, it could if it

[147] The moral impulses are natural, but they must be gratified, 'fed' in some way otherwise they could wither away. (Cf. D 109). As mentioned, however, there are healthier ways to satisfy these desires, such as in the self-cruelty of discipline for nobler pursuits. Also, in 2.11, Nietzsche pointed to the redirecting of the reactive affects such that they served the community, fueling a concern for justice.

is properly delivered and not prematurely aborted in an attempt to relieve the discomfort of this "state of distress."

All of this is to show that Nietzsche does *not* aim for the final victory of nihilism; he is striving to avoid this catastrophe of the spirit. However, it is not enough to maintain the tension of the spirit by reversing or halting the decline of morality by means of a godless Christian morality or otherwise reinvigorated ascetic ideal. There needs to be a different way of meeting the higher longings of man, to direct man to higher ends in a way that does not lead to this nihilistic breakdown. Nietzsche claims at the end of the third essay that up to now, mankind as a whole has known only one ideal, the ascetic ideal (3.28). The final sections of the second essay, however, point to the possibility of a new ideal, one that is neither moralized (it is 'antichristian') nor nihilistic (it is 'antinihilist').

This extended discussion drawing on the section-by-section commentary of the second essay, as well as on insights gained from the other two essays, is necessary to make sense of what Nietzsche means by 'moralization' and what type of morality he is attacking. Moreover, it reveals the dangers he is trying to avoid. As just noted, the third essay's discussion of the ascetic ideal bears on these final sections of the second essay, for in section 24, Nietzsche argues that this ideal must be overcome. With this synthetic discussion of 'moralization' as background, I can return to the commentary on the final sections of the essay. Here Nietzsche suggests the possibilities of a noble, life-affirming ideal. Section 23 shows the historical precedent of this in the decisively *un*ascetic Greek gods, and sections 24 and 25 point towards a new life-affirming ideal.

Chapter 11: (Section 23) Nobler Uses of Gods

-23-

The previous four sections (2.19-22) have described the development of religious beliefs through to the emergence of the 'holy God.' The "hallowing" of the concept of god brought with it the moralization of debt into guilt and the original bad conscience into the moral bad conscience. As I discussed in the previous chapter, the *Genealogy* presents various emotional excesses as the impetus behind this process; moralization is an inherent possibility in human nature. Given the manner in which the discussion over these previous sections has proceeded, it might seem that the "hallowing" that led to at the "maximum God thus far attained" is the necessary trajectory of religious beliefs. Furthermore, given all the sickness and madness described as emerging from such beliefs, it might seem that Nietzsche is condemning the "god concept" and religious belief as such. This is not the case, however. In this final section of his discussion on the gods, Nietzsche offers a defense: he claims that "there are *nobler* ways of making use of the fabrication of gods," ways that enhance and justify life. Gods can be used to satisfy the moralizing impulses in nobler ways, thus preventing moralization ("keeping it at arm's length"). Nietzsche points to the Greek gods as an exemplification of this.

In doing so, he returns to a discussion that he earlier delayed in section 2.19: "the aristocratizing and ennobling of the gods." There, Nietzsche granted that fear need not be the only factor behind religious belief; in the "*middle* period" of history when "the noble clans take shape," *piety* was a genuine factor in religious beliefs. Not only did these noble men 'pay back' their gods, they offered more than was required: they paid back "with interest." This "interest" consists of these noble men giving to their gods the "*noble* qualities" that they had come to see in themselves (2.19). This, then, marks a different kind of transformation of the gods. In the moralization of god described in 2.22, the transformation came from the oppressed man, the "man of bad conscience." The repressed cruelty gave birth to the negative ideal of the 'holy God,' who "captures the most extreme opposites [man] can find to his actual and inescapable animal instincts" (2.22). The "ennoblement" of the gods comes not from the self-rejecting slave but from the noble who accepts and even celebrates himself, projecting his own noble qualities to his gods. As Nietzsche says, the Greek gods were the "reflections of a noble and self-

mastered people." In the first essay, these noble values are said to represent what men feel to be their strongest, most powerful features; it is what they revere in themselves.[148] In attributing these qualities to their gods, these men offer more than obedience: they offer admiration, honor, reverence. This seems to be what Nietzsche means by piety.

The 'use' of the noble and the moral type of god is similarly different. The Christian suffers from a constant guilt over his sins, over his failure to live up to the impossible demands of his god. With his moral bad conscience, he torments himself for his moral failure to eliminate his "animal instincts" and to be other than he is. In contrast to this "self-crucifixion and self-defilement" is the *nobler*, Greek use of gods. The Greek gods, being "reflections" of these noble men, were not contradictions of life but rather the product of the self-affirmation of the Greeks, who rejoiced in the powerful impulses, the "animal instincts" they felt in themselves. Believing these instincts to be in the gods, "the animal in man felt itself deified." Thus, rather than being an impetus to intensify the bad conscience, the Greek gods served to minimize its effects: the animal in the Greek "*did not* tear itself apart, *did not* rage against itself."

Nietzsche thus claims that "For the longest time, these Greeks used their gods precisely to keep 'bad conscience' at arm's length". This is *not* the premoral bad conscience that is being kept at bay. That form of bad conscience exists in all men confined to society (2.16), which would certainly include the Greeks given their political life. In section 2.7, Nietzsche referred to the "Herakles of duty" and the "moral struggle" of the "the heroism and self-torture of the virtuous." As I mentioned in the previous chapter, Nietzsche is attacking 'anti-natural' morality, but the morality referred to here is a *noble* morality. The struggle is towards a higher ideal but not an otherworldly one; rather, it is a struggle towards *human* excellence. The premoral bad conscience was described as cruelty against "the entire ancient animal self" (2.18), and such cruelty would obviously be involved in this "self-torture." If one is to pursue such a higher goal,

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[148] The all-knowing Christian god is not strictly the absolute opposite of man. Indeed, in one way, this god too could be described as a projection of what man regards as highest in himself: the ability to reason distinguishes men from animals, and seeing this, man takes pride in this ability (cf. 2.8). Seeing this as divine is not all that surprising. The problem as noted, however, is that the Christian god is used to reject everything about oneself. All of the natural instincts are rejected such that a few features of man (his rational capacities) are radically separated from what is natural, being seen as part angelic whereas the rest is contaminated with the idea of evil. More to the point, however, is that God's wisdom is used to undermine the value of the human ability to reason, motivating a 'sacrifice of the intellect.'

the immediate desires would have to be suppressed, dominated by some other part of the soul that enforces the required self-discipline. There is thus the soul-conflict of the bad conscience here, but it is a 'will and a way to greater power' (2.11).

It is the *moralization* of the bad conscience that the Greek gods kept "at arm's length." An important part of the moral bad conscience is self-blame, and this is what the Greek gods prevented: the Greek did not blame himself for his failures. In describing the "moral struggle" of the virtuous, Nietzsche said that the "Herakles of duty" felt himself being observed by his gods, who were entertained by his struggle (2.7). The Greeks celebrated and encouraged such virtue. Those who failed, however, or those whose actions went the opposite way, to bad ends, such men did not feel guilty or dwell on self-blame. In part, this is because their gods too were fallible; in many myths, a god was lead astray by instincts and desires akin to those of humans. Moreover, individuals, far from blaming themselves instead blamed the gods for their failures. More generally, the gods were blamed for all the suffering in the world.

Nietzsche gives an example of this, referring to the case of Aegisthos, "a *very* bad case." Aegisthos seduced the wife of the Greek king Agamemnon, and murdered the king. In this particular case, the gods had warned Aegisthos of the consequences of his actions, that he would be killed by Agamemnon's son. Foolishly disregarding this divine warning, Aegisthos committed his crime and in turn was killed. The Homeric Zeus remarks on this incident as a case in which mortals blame the gods as the source of all such evil rather than accepting themselves and their own *folly* as the source of their misery. Zeus was not angry over such ignorance and folly, however. Rather, he was in a state of bemused wonder, and he merely judged the mortals as foolish, as *lacking understanding*. This judgment amounts to one flawed characteristic in these otherwise noble men. Nietzsche contrasts this to the Christian view, wherein God is decidedly '*not* amused,' condemning failures as *sins*.[149] These sins are not isolated, flawed features of an otherwise good man, much less *God's* fault. Rather, the sin makes the man entirely reprehensible and damned; no matter what else he is, he is 'a sinner.' In the Greek, however, even this single human fault was problematic. As with the evils, this fault was

[149] Nietzsche thus attributes a Socratic attitude to Homer's Zeus: evil comes from human ignorance. This is in contrast to the vengeful reaction of the holy God.

attributed to be the work of the gods: Greeks who committed evil actions must have been beguiled by the gods ('He whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad!').[150] Thus, unlike the Christian god, who takes mankind's punishment unto himself and in effect increases the sense of guilt and obligation, the Greek gods were put to "*nobler*" use – they took the guilt itself, the blame for man's faults.[151]

The Greeks, unlike Christians, thus felt no tension between themselves and their ideals. They could struggle towards these ideals, but they did not feel constrained by an inhuman ideal to be something they could not be. Moreover, they accepted their powerful drives; they did not despair that such drives could lead to terrible ends: they were "able to remain cheerful about their freedom of soul." Of course, there are political problems with such amoral gods and ideals: these embodiments of greed, cruelty, rage, lust, vengefulness, and other such affects may well lead to lawlessness and instability.[152] Nietzsche's praise seems to come from what he earlier referred to as "the biological standpoint," which is ultimately above the "*exceptional conditions*" of law or justice (2.11): the Greek myths justified and promoted the life instincts, the "instincts of freedom," bringing honor to both the active and reactive affects. In presenting *these* images of powerful instincts, such myths might encourage men to indulge the more terrible aspects of these instincts, bringing about dangerous circumstances and suffering – even threatening chaos (a danger of which the Greeks were keenly aware). However,

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[150] Saying attributed to Euripides.

[151] The gods are blamed, but Nietzsche does not indicate why this does not lead to *ressentiment* at the gods. Most directly, the suggestion is that part of the noble character is that he is not beset with this ugly passion, or if it comes to him, he quickly overcomes it (cf. 1.11). Another point that should be recalled is that in 2.7, Nietzsche said that the creation of tragedies was to offer "*festival games*" to the gods and to the more 'godlike' humans such as the poets. There is something about the Greeks that enable them to appreciate the tragic horrors of life. In the context of 2.7, it was more a matter of enjoying cruel spectacles, but put more generally, there is a recognition of a beauty in such tragedy, a recognition shared with the 'gods'' view of life. This question of *ressentiment* might be seen in Nietzsche's larger presentation of Greek culture in his *Birth of Tragedy* where he considers this 'strong pessimism' of the Greeks in contrast to the 'weak pessimism' of modern man.

[152] In his first book, *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche points out this peculiarly amoral character of the Greek gods: "Whoever approaches these Olympians with another religion in his heart, searching among them for moral elevation, even for sanctity, for disincarnate spirituality, for charity and benevolence, will soon be forced to turn his back on them, discouraged and disappointed. For there is nothing here that suggests asceticism, spirituality, or duty. We hear nothing but the accents of an exuberant, triumphant life in which all things, whether good or evil, are deified. And so the spectator may stand quite bewildered before this fantastic excess of life, asking himself by virtue of what magic potion these high spirited men could have found life so enjoyable that, wherever they turned, their eyes beheld the smile of Helen, the ideal picture of their own existence, 'floating in sweet sensuality'" (BT 3).

Nietzsche seems to accept this as a necessary part of these nobler, high-spirited men. In contrast to this, Nietzsche sees modern 'culture' as dedicated primarily to peace and stability, resulting in the reign of mediocrity and the sacrifice of the very possibility of great men, be they good or evil: "but who would not a hundred times sooner fear where one can also admire than *not* fear but be permanently condemned to the repellent sight of the ill-constituted, dwarfed, atrophied, and poisoned?" (1.12).

Needless to say, this is a most unconventional presentation of Greek culture and the Greek gods, but it is especially interesting for the contrast between this nobility and the anti-natural morality that Nietzsche has been attacking. As mentioned, the possibility of these noble gods was introduced in 2.19; they emerge when the "noble clans take shape" in the "*middle* period" of history. Nietzsche does not explain, however, how these noble clans or characteristics emerged, and so it is difficult to say how the gods became "ennobled." That said, Nietzsche did hint at the eventual ennoblement of the gods when he described the emergence of the bad conscience. He called the bad conscience a sickness, but also praised the great potential that emerged with it. In praising this momentous achievement, Nietzsche hinted at the eventual emergence of noble gods, those who appreciated man and his potential – that is, there would eventually be noble men who believed in gods that appreciated man:

> divine spectators were necessary to appreciate the spectacle that thus began and whose end is still by no means in sight—a spectacle too refined, too wonderful, too paradoxical to be permitted to play itself out senselessly-unnoticed on some ridiculous star! Since that time man is *included* among the most unexpected and exciting lucky throws in the game played by the 'big child' of Heraclitus, whether called Zeus or chance... (2.16).

In regards to this, it should be recalled that the bad conscience was associated with the "hallowing" of god. Through his extreme self-rejection, the "man of bad conscience" projected an ideal opposed to everything about himself (2.22). It may be that some form of conscience is also associated with this ennoblement of the gods and with noble ideals

in general. This form of conscience would likewise be characterized not by self-rejection, but by this nobler self-affirmation. Indeed, such a conscience has earlier been described as being associated with the "Sovereign Individual" (2.2). Nietzsche's focus in this polemic is on slaves and the developments that occurred within them, and as such, there is no further indication as to the origin of noble gods. However, as the current section offers a contrast between noble and moral types of gods, so too can the sovereign individual's conscience be analyzed in order to see another such contrast: that is, between the moral bad conscience and a nobler form of conscience. Along with presenting the contrast in these types of gods, the current section has pointed to the possibility of nobility in general. The final sections of the essay will further discuss these higher possibilities in man. Before turning to those sections, however, I will first offer an analysis of the nobler form of conscience.

Chapter 12: A Nobler Form of Conscience

With section 23, Nietzsche ends his historical account in the second essay. In the final sections, Nietzsche looks to the future, to new possibilities for man and new ideals to strive towards. Before moving to these sections, there remains a discussion that was earlier delayed: this is the character of the Sovereign Individual, and in particular, the nature of his conscience, which was described as being "the highest, almost disconcerting form, [which] already has behind it a long history and metamorphosis" (2.3). I delayed discussing this form of conscience, but having considered the other forms of conscience (the original bad conscience and its subsequent 'metamorphosis' into the moral bad conscience), I can now offer an analysis of this highest form of conscience.

In the commentary on the final section, more will be said about the other features of the Sovereign Individual and his relevance to the essay as a whole, but for the moment, I will focus only on those characteristics related to his conscience. In the passage most directly describing this conscience, Nietzsche claims that "the proud knowledge of the extraordinary privilege of *responsibility*, the consciousness of this rare freedom, this power over oneself and fate, has sunk into his lowest depth and has become instinct, the dominant instinct."[153] This dominant instinct is identified as the Sovereign Individual's conscience.[154] Another passage earlier in the section describes this 'embedded' pride as "a proud consciousness, twitching in all his muscles, of *what* has finally been achieved and become flesh in him, a true consciousness of power and freedom, a feeling of completion of man himself."[155]

The nature of this dominant instinct as conscience will be discussed in a moment, but first, in regards to these various features of the Sovereign Individual, they all are

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[153] I am unsure as to the distinction between the proud *knowledge* and the proud *consciousness*.

[154] More precisely, Nietzsche says that "conscience" is the word the sovereign individual would use, "assuming he feels the need to have a word for it". As I discuss below, this "dominant instinct" is comparable to the other forms of bad conscience that Nietzsche has discussed. Perhaps the hesitation to name it as such is because of the unconventionality of this understanding of conscience as a dominant part of the soul. Or perhaps this is related to Zarathustra's speech on passions: "your strongest passion is your particular virtue; it is yours alone and naming it makes it common, losing its particular individuality" (Z.1.5).

[155] The "man of ressentiment" could also be said to have a proud consciousness of himself. However, it is not spontaneous self-affirmation of the sovereign man, but rather, it is a slavish self-aggrandizement dependent on the derision of others. This is characteristic of the slave's manner of valuation, first denouncing someone and then calling oneself good. What is slavish about this is that this proud one (the "moral self-gratifier"; 3.14) is dependent on what he hates; without that other one, he would be nothing.

related to the particular nature of his will. There are two general characteristics of this will, the first being that it is a "long, unbreakable will." In the first section of the essay, Nietzsche refers to it as a "long chain of will," which begins with a commitment to some future act (an 'I want,' or an 'I will do') and is maintained through to the final discharge of that will. Between these two events – the original willing and the acting on the will – the individual may often desire to disregard his original commitment, but he resists these desires and maintains an unbroken commitment to his original will. This prolonged will makes a person capable of giving and keeping promises, but this by itself is not yet sufficient for what Nietzsche calls the "*entitlement to make promises*" (2.1,2) It might be that the person is keeping the promise only because of some external force such as the threat of punishment. In this case, the promise itself is meaningless: what is expressed is a will to avoid punishment, not a will to fulfill the promise. Nevertheless, this fearful will can be prolonged and unbroken.

What is also necessary is the second characteristic of the Sovereign Individual's will: it is what Nietzsche calls a "free will." As discussed earlier, he ridicules and dismisses the traditional doctrine of "free will," treating it as a belief in the "absolute spontaneity of man in good and evil" (2.7). The notion of this kind of free will is based on the belief in an indivisible soul. Associated with this 'monadic' soul is a single will that is supposedly absolutely spontaneous in all of its choices (cf. 1.13). While Nietzsche uses the term "free will" in his discussion of the Sovereign Individual, he is giving the term a new meaning. Recall that Nietzsche conceives of the soul as a multiplicity of drives; each drive attempts to express itself, and each of these attempts constitute a separate will. The strongest drive (or the strongest constellation of drives moving towards the same end) is what rules and directs the soul as a whole. This is what Nietzsche means in *BGE* 21 when he says that it is not a question of free or unfree will, but rather a question of "*strong* and *weak* wills." However, another question emerges: *why* is the ruling will stronger? Is it ruling because it is inherently stronger than the other drives, or does it rule only with the 'aid' of external forces? Nietzsche makes a distinction between reactivity and activity in the *Genealogy* that bears on this question. In the example of the promiser who subsequently wants to disregard his promise but keeps it because of an external threat, fear is ruling in his soul. This reactive drive is strongest only because of a

pressing stimulus, that of the external threat. In the case of an active commitment to keeping a promise, this commitment is inherently stronger than the other drives. The reactive drives are engendered by an external stimulus, gaining enough strength from that stimulus to rule over the other drives of the soul. If these active drives are weak, the soul will be ruled by reactive affects. As such, it is in effect 'determined' by the external forces; or as Nietzsche puts it in 2.12, the person becomes a functionary of the external power (cf. 2.17, which refers to masters giving form and function to an unshaped people). The active drives, on the other hand, rule because of their own strength, resisting externally strengthened drives and thus resisting external control. The expression of such an inherently strong drive is a 'free will;' one ruled by this will is a "self-mastered" man (2.2).[156]

To return to the characteristics of the Sovereign Individual, his "independent long will" is behind these features of which he is so proud. Because of his strong, reliable will, he has a rare freedom and power over himself (that is, over his more transitory drives) and "fate" (whatever arises from the external environment). This will also makes him "entitled to make promises," for he has both the active will and the power to keep his promises without the need for external prompting. This entitlement is what gives the

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[156] I am uncertain as to Nietzsche's position on determinism. As mentioned in the commentary on 2.12, he praises active forces, the "spontaneous, attacking, infringing, reinterpreting, reordering, and formative forces, upon whose effect the 'adaptation' first follows." This is not the 'mechanistic senselessness' that would be associated with a 'first cause' that plays itself out in subsequent mechanistic reactions. Nietzsche's drive psychology, however, traces willing to unconscious forces. Moreover, these seem to be based on some physiological source (the active drives are of "greater biological value"; 2.11). While the person may try to alter the ruling structure of his soul, changing the various strengths of drives through indulgence and exercise or neglect, the question still emerges as to why he would do that – is it not because of another drive: there is an already present desire to move toward that end (perhaps engendered by images of exemplars), a drive that guides the person, overpowering contrary drives and supporting the necessary drives (cf. D. 109). To make sense of this determinism, a deeper account of the self is required as to what it is that at least seems to be behind the willing, the 'I' that seems to be in control. Nietzsche does not address this in the *Genealogy*, other than to dismiss the idea of a separate 'subject' (1.13). In *BGE*, however, Nietzsche claims that the choice is the subsequent result of the unconscious power struggle of the different drives (BGE 32). Nietzsche treats the 'I' as a retroactive interpretation of effects ('the effect, it is me'; BGE 19).

Despite all of this, I am hesitant to grant pre-determinism. In part, because I cannot account for the notion of the Sovereign Individual's 'privilege of responsibility' in these terms. But more importantly, this epiphenomenalism does not seem to account for all features of the self. The consciousness of willing does not seem to be wholly retroactive. Also, I am unsure of the status of reason or even of thoughts in this psychology. Reason does seem to have a power, one that is able to affect these drives, perhaps offering guidance to some of them which in turn rule over the others.

Sovereign Individual the "privilege of responsibility," which would not be given to "lesser-willed and more unreliable creatures."[157]

It is the proud knowledge and consciousness of these features that becomes the dominant instinct in the Sovereign Individual, the instinct that constitutes his conscience. The other forms of bad conscience were also a matter of domination, with some drive or instinct ruling over the rest of the soul. What distinguishes these different forms of conscience and bad conscience is the primary activity of this dominant instinct. In the different forms of the bad conscience previously discussed, the primary activity is negative. The bad conscience emerged in one oppressed by masters or society, and this bad conscience was primarily a matter of suppressing the natural inclinations, "burning into oneself a will, a critique, a contradiction, a contempt, a 'No'" (2.18). This negative domination continues with the moral bad conscience, where the end itself is self-rejection and elimination of the instincts. For the most part, both of these types of bad conscience were a matter of conforming to some external will (be it the masters', society's, or the 'will of God'). However, even in those cases where the bad conscience was said to become *active*, creating its own ideals, it does so first by negation, creating negative ideals, and only subsequently positing an opposite, creating positive ideals.

The 'conscience' of the Sovereign Individual is of an opposite character: the primary activity of this proud knowledge and consciousness is positive affirmation of oneself. The long, protracted will is celebrated, along with all the qualities it enables, all the freedom and power of the individual. Like the bad conscience, this conscience creates ideals, but from an affirmation of one's own characteristics. The strong, reliable will is treated as a "*measure of value*" with which one judges others, honoring those with a similar will, looking down upon those who lack it (2.2). Moreover, one judges oneself with this measure, striving to uphold it. This type of measure corresponds to the "noble manner of valuation" that Nietzsche describes in the first essay, which is also a "triumphant yes-saying to oneself" (1.10). Likewise, the Sovereign Individual, because of

[157] Another feature of this freedom of the Sovereign Individual is that he is autonomous and supraethical (*übersittlich*). His actions are guided by his own active will not by the power of a higher authority. Of course, the autonomous person could actively choose to do many things considered moral or avoid the immoral, but on the basis of his own 'authority,' his own willing of that end.

his freedom and entitlement to make promises, is said to be "*entitled to say 'yes'* to [himself] too" (2.3).

Like the bad conscience, this positive conscience is described as a dominant instinct, implying that it rules over the soul. This does not mean that the 'long, unbreakable will' does not rule. Rather, it means that other active drives express themselves along with it, gaining satisfaction from the particular will being maintained and reaching its end. It is this particular constellation of drives, the commitment to the initial willing and the pride in the characteristics attendant to such commitment, that forms the dominant instinct that *is* the conscience. Of course, along with this affirmation, there will necessarily be some suppression of other drives, those that are contrary to the protracted will – the internalized desire for cruelty will still be satisfied. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this is *not* the self-laceration of the moral bad conscience, but a suppression for the purpose the satisfying these higher, prouder drives. When carrying out this negative activity, this conscience would be called 'bad conscience' (cf. 2.24) – but because the primary activity is the positive affirmation, it is spoken of simply as 'conscience.'

Some examples will help to illustrate the character of this conscience, for the description that Nietzsche gives in section 2.2 is quite formal. The conscience supports an active commitment to the maintenance of a will, but what is the particular will that is ruling? A will to *what*? The *Genealogy* provides some instances of this actively ruling drive as a prolonged will.

Instances of the Sovereign Individual

When I initially commented on the Sovereign Individual (2.2), I suggested that there could be approximations of this character. This would be the nobles or masters referred to in the second essay. The previous chapter highlighted such an approximation in the form of the Greeks, a "noble and self-mastered" people. Out of pride, such people affirm themselves and their nature, even projecting this idea on to their gods, thus ennobling them. The focus of that discussion, however, was on the contrast between the noble and moral type of god. As such, it is difficult to say much more about the form of conscience that might be associated with these noble people. However, there are a few

other specific instances in the *Genealogy* of how such a sovereign conscience might operate.

The first is in section 2.11, where Nietzsche describes the rare instance of the truly "just man," what Nietzsche calls a "piece of perfection and highest mastery on Earth." In this just man, there is an active desire to give fair, objective judgment (Nietzsche claims that being just is a "*positive* way of behaving," not a withdrawn indifference). This judgment entails resisting all other inclinations that would bias that judgment. Specifically, Nietzsche discusses the need to overcome the reactive feelings of *ressentiment*. When someone is injured or insulted by another person, reactive feelings such as hatred, ill will and a desire for vengeance will form. The judgment of most people will be informed by their reactive feelings; they will take a harsher view of their offender than they would have otherwise, and they will want him punished, to suffer for the injury perpetrated on them. The just man, with his active commitment to fair evaluation, overcomes such vindictive feelings, not allowing his judgment to be dominated by the feelings engendered by his offender. It may be that his injurer would benefit from punishment: the punishment might prompt other drives to rule in him, even if that means only that he will not harm others out of fear of suffering harm himself. The just man would make this judgment based on evaluation of his injurer unbiased by the spirit of revenge.

As I previously noted, Nietzsche gives no indication as to the motivation for this 'justice' that is the attempt to carry out unbiased evaluation.[158] Related to this commitment to evaluation, however, is Nietzsche's discussion of the philosopher, also referred to as the "knower" (*der Erkennenden*; cf. P.1-2; 3.12). Here Nietzsche's concern is with the possibility of a 'free mind' (or 'free spirit'): a mind whose content is not simply a reflection of the individual's background (e.g. the prejudices of language) or environment. This possibility is a primary concern in *BGE*, where Nietzsche presents the problem of 'why truth,' 'why seek knowledge at all?' This question of free will bears on the question of a free mind, in that it too is a matter of strong and weak wills. In most minds, this drive to evaluate is weak, and so the mind will be shaped by more immanent

[158] Nor does he indicate what standards are to be applied. Are they conventional, matching the 'right' and 'wrong' of his society, or is there some natural justice/right that he is applying?

desires, accepting the immediately apparent, what conforms to present opinions or what satisfies the other drives. This is the case in the moralizing reinterpretations by the "man of *ressentiment*" and the "man of bad conscience" – their understanding of the gods is merely a function of satisfying their pressing desires for vengeance or self-cruelty. By contrast, in the knower there is a powerful drive committed to the pursuit of knowledge, a commitment that will not be overridden by the other drives of the soul. A distinction must be made, however, as to which drive is in control in this knower. In 3.24, Nietzsche dismisses the "intellectual conscience" as just another *moral* pursuit, a disguised form of the ascetic ideal. This type of 'knower' or 'philosopher' is a dogmatist, one who has faith in the *unconditional* value of truth as a 'good-in-itself' and that truth is something otherworldly existing apart from the lived world of appearance ("God is truth… truth is *divine*"). Nietzsche is not rejecting the idea of truth; he is attacking the unconditional value given to it, and the moral concerns that motivate the pursuit. This type of knower believes that he must deny everything about himself, escaping from this life by pursuing 'truth' disinterestedly. This kind of commitment to truth is a form of the moral bad conscience, with the dominant drive leading the person to self-denial and rejection.

There is, however, the possibility here of a Sovereign 'intellectual conscience,' where the primary activity of the domination is not self-denial but rather an acceptance and affirmation of oneself. Nietzsche addresses this earlier in the third essay when he discusses what the ascetic ideal really means to a philosopher: it is not an end-in-itself, but merely the 'will and way to greater power' (2.11). The philosopher does deny many of his drives – as Nietzsche notes in *BGE* 229 (referred to in 2.6), there is great self-cruelty in the knower: "the knower… compels his mind to knowledge which is *counter* to the inclination of his mind [i.e. to simplicity] and frequently also to the desires of his heart" (cf. *A* 50).[159] However, this self-denial is not in the name of a disinterested pursuit. Rather, it is the effect of a more powerful drive: a tremendous curiosity and joy of discovery, a passionate pursuit of knowledge (the 'thrill of the hunt') that overpowers the other drives of the soul.[160] The 'free mind' is made possible by a long, protracted will to

[159] Nietzsche describes this type of knower as also pursuing truth, but this knower does not give truth moral value. As such, this knower sees it as bad taste to morally play the martyr, "to *suffer* for the truth" (3.8).
[160] Nietzsche includes Plato with the Christian and secular dogmatists (3.24). However, Socrates' defense of the 'virtuousness' of the philosopher suggests otherwise. In claiming that the philosopher is moderate,

knowledge that resists the other inclinations of the soul: this is because of "the *dominant* instinct that forced through all its demands against those of all other instincts" (3.8).[161] This form of 'intellectual conscience' corresponds to the Sovereign conscience and the affirmation of one's ruling characteristics: in his pursuit, "[the philosopher] does *not* negate 'existence,' rather he affirms *his* existence and *only* his existence" (3.7) – from his affirmation, he forms his own "*standard of value*" (2.2).[162]

As did the presentation of the nobler Greek gods, this Sovereign Individual's noble, yes-saying conscience points to the higher possibilities for man. In the next chapter, more will be said about the philosopher as the Sovereign Individual and the relevance of the "mastery over himself" that is associated with this sovereign conscience. The final sections of the essay can now be considered, where Nietzsche again points to nobler possibilities, now towards a future with a new, life-affirming ideal, an ideal is meant to counter the lingering effects of past morality and the danger of encroaching nihilism.

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Socrates indicates that this moderation is only incidental, an effect of an extreme *immoderation*, a great erotic love for wisdom (Book 6). Nietzsche's criticism of past philosophy in this context is that it pretended to be ascetic, donning the mask of asceticism to make itself feared and protect itself from suspicion (including the philosopher's own suspicion engendered by his earlier commitment to the customs of the community). Having identified the ascetic ideal as pernicious to this life, to this existence, Nietzsche wants future philosophy to be openly honest about its earthly passion.

[161] This is not the 'absolute knowledge' of a transcendent viewpoint, outside of life and perspective (cf. BGE pref.), but rather, it is perspectival knowledge, seeking ever more and higher perspectives, not accepting those immediately apparent or those that flatter and appeal to one's other inclinations (cf. 3.12: Nietzsche's advice to 'us knowers' and 'gentlemen philosophers' to make the "*difference* in perspectives and affective interpretations useful for knowledge").

[162] That there is an element of pride in this dominant instinct that leads to this active commitment to evaluation is suggested in 2.8, where Nietzsche identifies the earliest pride in relation to evaluation. Man differentiates himself from animals, seeing his superiority in his ability to evaluate. This pride could be part of the suppression of the other drives, but again, this need not entail a shame or a hatred of those other drives. In the preface to *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche also suggests a connection between wisdom and pride. Zarathustra associates his wisdom and pride with his animal companions, the snake and the eagle. "That I might be wiser! That I might be wise through and through like my serpent! But there I ask the impossible: so I ask my pride that it always go along with my wisdom. And when my wisdom leaves me one day—alas, it loves to fly away—let my pride then fly with my folly."

Chapter 13: (Sections 24, 25) A New, Life-Affirming Ideal

-24- [163]

Nietzsche closes the second essay with remarks that reveal *some* of the purposes the essay itself is to serve. The *Genealogy* as a whole is a "polemic," crafted to help destroy the moral ideals and teachings that have hitherto been dominant. Specifically, this second essay targets the moral sentiments that accompany and support these past ideals: 'guilt, *moral* bad conscience, and the like.'[164] The attack itself is in the form of a genealogy that reveals the ugly origins of such sentiments. That is, these sentiments are revealed to emerge from a bizarre psychic entanglement of previously amoral elements such as the earlier bad conscience as well as the superstitious fear of gods and in debts owed to them. These elements were forced together and moralized under the impetus of an ugly constellation of repressed desires: cruelty, vengeance and the longing to understand one's suffering. Moreover, moral ideals themselves are attacked, for Nietzsche describes how the acceptance of these ideals is motivated by the desire to satisfy these repressed desires. The moral man, in failing to live up to these 'anti-natural,' life-denying ideals, blames himself for his failure; he then tortures himself and accepts all his suffering as what he *deserves* for his moral failures. This is the morbid *sickness* that Nietzsche presents as morality and the moral sentiments. The polemic, then, is crafted to shock and disturb moral men, making them question their sentiments and possibly lose faith in their commitment to these moral ideals.

All of this destruction and undermining, however, is not an end in itself; it is in service of a higher task. The destruction is necessary, Nietzsche claims, because to create something new, to raise a new ideal, one must destroy what came before it.[165] The new ideal is the subject of the remainder of the section, with Nietzsche describing what such an ideal would require. He first addresses the most immediate subject matter of the second essay, namely, the bad conscience. The polemic has been against the moralized form of bad conscience that was "wedded" to all of man's natural inclinations. With this

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[163] Nietzsche says he closes with three question marks but goes on to write seven. I am unsure if the three questions are actually within the seven, but if so, they would seem to be first, what he is doing, second, to whom to turn with such hopes, three, is such an individual possible?

[164] 'The like' (or 'related matters') refers to other such sentiments as *moral* obligation and *moral* responsibility.

[165] The "no-saying, no-*doing*" effort is in service to the "yes-saying" part of Nietzsche's task (EH B.BGE).

moral bad conscience, man became ashamed of his nature and lacerated himself over these inclinations (2.7). This need not be the final form of the bad conscience, however: Nietzsche claims that a "reverse attempt" is "*in itself* possible." The bad conscience could be "wed to [...] the *unnatural* inclinations" that are in man, those that are towards what is "contrary to the senses, contrary to the instincts, contrary to nature, contrary to the animal." These '*unnatural*' inclinations are those impulses that incline man towards 'anti-natural' morality; they are *natural* in that they are inherent in man but they can lead man astray, towards what is unnatural, namely, to the fantastical and otherworldly. These impulses themselves cannot be destroyed – they are part of that "basic, eternal text *homo natura*" (BGE 230) – but they can be redirected towards other uses. Indeed, that Nietzsche aims to utilize the bad conscience illustrates this. The bad conscience, 'the soul turned against itself,' has been described as the internalization of cruelty. The potentially moralizing impulse of self-cruelty will thus be put in service *not* of the anti-natural, but rather of the life-affirming ideal Nietzsche points towards.

In regards to this "reverse attempt" to forge a new form of the bad conscience, this is part of a larger effort, namely, the reversal or "transvaluation of all values" (3.27).[166] Such an effort is of enormous, seemingly impossible magnitude. However, Nietzsche assures the reader that it is "*in itself*" possible. Indeed, the first essay of the *Genealogy* highlights this possibility, presenting a previous "transvaluation of all values": the "slave revolt in morality" that reversed and triumphed over "all *nobler* ideals" (1.8). That effort was said to require two thousand years to reach its victory, and Nietzsche's own goal, the overcoming of this slave transvaluation, is a task of similar scope. It may be conceptually possible, but the practical problem that immediately arises is how it would be carried out in present circumstances. "[W]ho is strong enough for it," Nietzsche asks, "To whom to turn today with *such* hopes and demands?"

In answering this question, Nietzsche explores the types of spirit (or mind – *geist*) that would be required for achieving this goal. He first warns that those who would even pursue such a goal will become alienated from their own time: Nietzsche's is a most untimely task, working against much that is considered precious today. One pursuing this goal would be opposed by all the "good men" of today, those committed to the modern

[166] Cf. BGE 203: Part of the "transvaluation of all values" entails the forging of a new conscience.

ideals, as well as those who are simply comfortable with today and are resistant to change. Such 'good men' are not only the remaining Christians, however. They are the secular moralists of the democratic enlightenment that Nietzsche describes in *BGE* 44: "free thinkers" who defend all 'modern ideas,' teaching doctrines such as "'equality of rights' and 'sympathy for all that suffers.'" Along with this, they treat suffering as "something that has to be *abolished*," and encourage above all else, "security, safety, comfort and an easier life for all" (BGE 44). The goal of such men is a general "letting-go," a relaxing of any tension or strictness such that the only required restraint is that of not harming others (2.24, BGE 44; cf. BGE 188, 202). These 'good men' provide a contrast to the spirits Nietzsche is describing. Such spirits, sharing Nietzsche's higher goal would need to treat themselves with a "strictness and height." That is, in contrast to this modern 'letting-go' and egalitarianism, these spirits would have a respect for discipline and rank. Such spirits, then, *are free spirits*, those no longer committed to modern ideas. Nietzsche is searching for such spirits, and indeed, even attempting to create them. This is one of the purposes of the polemic: to disturb and hopefully free at least some minds from these 'modern ideas.' It should also be noted here that the "strictness" opposed to a "letting-go" necessarily entails self-denial, suppressing other drives and desires of the soul. Again, 'self-cruelty' is part of this new ideal.

The "height" mentioned suggests rank, and Nietzsche discusses these spirits in increasingly selective terms. The transvaluation goal requires a "*different* kind of spirit" than are likely today. Nietzsche first refers to these spirits' polemical nature: they will be strengthened by wars and victories; "conquering, adventure, danger, pain" will have become a need for them. In contrast to the modern commitment to peace and indiscriminate compassion, these spirits would value strife and suffering, seeing the need of pain for themselves and perhaps others as well. Here, then, is another potentially moralizing impulse that will be addressed: the need to understand suffering. Again, in that contrast to the supposed 'free thinkers,' Nietzsche points to the value the free spirits see in suffering, regarding it as a precondition to all improvement (BGE 44).

As Nietzsche refines the description of the free spirits he has in mind, he speaks of them mainly in metaphorical terms, describing them as rising ever higher: they would need "acclimatization to sharp high air, to wintry journeys, to ice and mountain ranges in

every sense." This presumably refers to those few who would rise to ever higher perspectives, such that they could *understand* Nietzsche's positive teaching, and so help carry it out.[167] Nietzsche sums up what is required of these high spirits: "*great health*!" This is described in *JS* 382 as what is necessary in those who would discover new ideals and conquer the old, and there this health is characterized as an "overflowing power and abundance."[168] Such comprehensive greatness of health seems related to the self-affirming nobility described in the first essay of the *Genealogy*, but something still higher in that it is self-conscious: it has "an ultimate self-assured mischievousness of knowledge" (GM 2.24). Nietzsche also points to cruelty again, speaking of "sublime malice." In 2.6, Nietzsche described the "disinterested malice" of the enjoyment of open cruelty. This sublimated form of cruelty might be involved in the conscience of this spirit, the discipline required to achieve such heights. I will say some more about this spirit that embodies *great health* in the next section, but for the moment, it should be noted that both cruelty and the need to understand suffering have been mentioned, but *ressentiment* is not included in this section – this base, reactive affect is something that must be resisted and overcome in the one who would attain this great health.[169]

This free ('*very free*') spirit imbued with great health is the one strong enough to carry out the "transvaluation of all values," conquering the old ideals and bringing new ideals to man. In discussing the possibility of this being of *great health*, Nietzsche alters his rhetoric, now sounding more like a religious prophet. He foretells the coming of the savior, the "redeeming man," who will bring about "the *redemption* of this reality,"

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[167] Nietzsche frequently uses this language of mountains and ice in describing philosophy. For example, EH p.3: "Those who can breathe the air of my writings know that it is an air of the heights, a *strong* air. One must be made for it. Otherwise there is no small danger that one may catch cold in it. The ice is near, the solitude tremendous (...). Philosophy as I have so far understood and lived it, means living voluntarily among ice and high mountains—seeking out everything strange and questionable in existence, everything so far placed under a ban by morality." (Cf. BGE 30, Z 1.7).

[168] The Great Health is subject of the second last aphorism of the fifth book of *The Joyous Science* (382; this fifth book was published the same year as the *Genealogy*, added to the previous four books). Like GM 2.24-25, it points the reader back to Zarathustra ("the tragedy begins"; cf. JS 342, "*Incipit tragoedia*"). See Lampert's account of *JS* 382 – the Great Health "epitomizes the spirit of the whole book [*JS*] and expresses a new ideal." The metaphor of the convalescence towards Great Health runs through Nietzsche's later works, symbolizing the overcoming of the sickness of past philosophy, towards a new, Nietzschean philosophy. (*Nietzsche and Modern Times*, p. 436-441).

[169] In EH, Nietzsche describes Zarathustra as being the embodiment of this "*great health*" (EH:Books, Z.2). Part of his 'great health' comes from his coalescence from past sickness: through willing eternal return, he overcame the spirit of revenge (Z.3.Coalescence).

saving it from "the curse that the previous ideal put upon it."[170] This previous ideal is the 'hallowed' ascetic ideal, which maximized the sickness of bad conscience and devalued all of nature in favor of an alternate reality: a heaven that embodied the good-in-itself. This redeemer will save man from the old ideal, as well as from "*that which had to grow out of it*": nihilism and "the great nausea." These latter effects are the danger for potentially great men who have been able to free themselves from the old ideal. If they have no positive guidance, all around them they will see only the sickly creature man has become. This sick man might be the moral man who suffers from the morbid sickness of the moral bad conscience, torturing himself over his imaginary 'sins.' Even worse, however, are those spiritless creatures of the democratic enlightenment, those who are simply content with mediocre life, longing for nothing higher than peace, comfort and diversion (the "wretched self-contentment" of the "last man"; Z p.4). These repulsive images will make this potentially great man despair over the future of mankind; he will suffer from "*great nausea at man!*" (and possibly be dragged down through the distraction of "*great compassion for man!*"; 3.14).[171] Mankind, and particularly the peaks of mankind, must be saved from these dangers. This would supposedly be accomplished by this new redeemer, an "Anti-Christ and Anti-Nihilist" who will bring forth a new ideal, giving new meaning to the world. Nietzsche promises that this redeemer will come – "*he must one day come …*".

With this, Nietzsche abruptly cuts off his description. Perhaps being deliberately disappointing, he does not actually discuss the content of the positive, life-affirming ideal that this redeeming man would bring. Instead, this free spirit imbued with great health, this redeeming man is offered only as a brief glimpse, an image of the possible realization of the positive ideal. Nietzsche does not defend or elaborate this image. Instead, in the final, brief section of the essay, Nietzsche directs the reader to "the greatest gift ever given to mankind," his *Zarathustra* (EH p.4).

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[170] EH.B.GM: "Above all, a *counter-ideal* was lacking—until *Zarathustra*."

[171] Cf. 3.14: "What is to be feared, what has a doomful effect such as no other doom, would not be the great fear but rather the great *disgust* at man; likewise the great *compassion* for man. Supposing that these two should mate one day, then immediately something of the most uncanny nature would unavoidably come into the world, the 'last will' of man, his will to nothingness, nihilism."

Nietzsche thus directs the reader to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, that work which he identifies as the completion of the "yes-saying part of [his] task" (EH B.BGE). There, Nietzsche tells the story of Zarathustra, the one who attained "*Great Health*" through overcoming the sicknesses of the past (the spirit of revenge towards existence and the past, as well as the sickness of the great nausea at man). Zarathustra achieved his convalescence through realizing a life-affirming, yes-saying ideal, that of willing the eternal recurrence of all that has occurred. The teaching of this redemptive ideal and the need for it are what Nietzsche directs the reader towards, having otherwise committed himself to silence ("Enough! Enough!").

While there is not much more to be said about this section itself, some summary remarks can be offered on the use of this image of the redemptive man in these final sections of the essay, and how this serves the larger purpose of the essay. First, however, it should be noted that while this image is most explicitly reflective of Zarathustra, it can also be seen in the corresponding ideal that Nietzsche uses in *Beyond Good and Evil*: "the philosopher of the future."[172] The most relevant aphorism to this redemptive ideal is *BGE* 203, where Nietzsche speaks of the "faith" of the free spirits and the image of an ideal man that guides these spirits towards a new goal ("It is the image of such leaders which hovers before *our* eyes"; BGE 203). The task is that of bringing about improved, stronger spirits – "new philosophers, [...] spirits strong and original enough to make a start on antithetical evaluations and to transvalue and reverse 'eternal values.'" As noted above, part of what is required for realizing this goal is the forging of a new conscience in line with this "transvaluation." Another connection between *GM* 2.24 and *BGE 203* is that, in describing the redemptive man, Nietzsche claims that along with giving "back to the Earth its goal and to man his hope" (that is, towards this highest type of man), the

[172] *BGE* also contains an indirect reference to the redeeming man who wills eternal return in the chapter entitled "The Religious Essence." The language of this reference is similar to the religious language of *GM* 2.24, this time sounding more like a long religious hymn: "[...] the ideal of the most exuberant, most living and most world-affirming man, who has not only learned to get on and treat with all that was and is but who wants to have it again *as it was and is* to all eternity, insatiably calling out *da capo* not only to himself but to the whole piece and play, and not only to a play but fundamentally to him who needs precisely this play – and who makes it necessary: because he needs himself against and again – and makes himself necessary" (*BGE* 56).

redemptive man would also make "the will free again" (GM 2.24). As I discussed in Chapter 12, this is not the 'free will' of the traditional dichotomy between free will and determinism. Rather, it is a matter of freeing spirits/minds from the domination of past ideals, such that their wills would no longer be 'prejudiced,' must less constrained by those ideals. With such *free* will, the future would be open to being commanded, at least by those with *strong* enough wills: the "new kind of philosopher and commander" who shall conceive and will new ideals, guiding mankind, "compelling the will of millennia on to *new* paths" (BGE 203).

In the "free will" and the commanding role of this redemptive man, there is an allusion to another image, one that was described earlier in this second essay of the *Genealogy*: the Sovereign Individual.[173] This sovereign, "who has become free" is described as a "master of the *free* will" (2.2). In line with what was just stated above, this "free will" of the Sovereign Individual is the freedom to will new ideals, to direct himself and perhaps even mankind along new paths rather than those of past ideals. It is this freedom *and* strength of will that entails a "mastery over himself," which makes this man sovereign, giving him "mastery over circumstances, over nature and all lesser-willed and more unreliable creatures." Relating this back to the description of the 'philosophers of the future' described throughout *BGE*, these most sovereign men possess the most active, strongest wills (212), so strong that they can bear the greatest tasks and responsibilities (61), becoming "*commanders and law givers*" of mankind, "determin[ing] the Whither and For What of man" (211).[174]

As with these other images of ideal men, this sovereign individual is presented as a guiding ideal. Indeed, he is presented as something that all of history is working towards: the "end result of an enormous process, where the tree finally produces its fruit"

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[173] In his essay, "Note on the Plan of Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*," Leo Strauss connects the philosopher of the future (BGE 203) to the Sovereign Individual of GM 2.2, both being the "men of the highest spirituality, of the greatest reason" (par. 23; cf. Laurence Lampert, *Leo Strauss and Nietzsche*, p. 76 – Strauss' essay is included in Lampert's book).

[174] As discussed in Chapter 12, the sovereign individual's conscience is based in his proud self-consciousness. This conscience seems to be informed and guided by a *noble* ideal, that is, one founded in the self-affirmation of one's own nature (cf. GM 1.10,11). This conscience was described as "the proud knowledge of the extraordinary privilege of *responsibility*, the consciousness of this rare freedom, this power over oneself and fate…" (2.2). Again, an echo of this can be heard in Nietzsche's description of the philosopher in *BGE* 61: "The philosopher as *we* understood him, we free spirits – the man of the most comprehensive responsibility, who has the conscience for the collective evolution of mankind…".

(2.2). In this way, he is also redemptive, as he is said to justify all history that precedes and contributes to him. Likewise, in section 24, the redeeming man is presented as a goal that must be struggled towards, as something to be attained in "a stronger time." The sovereign individual is similar: the "fruit" of man's history has not yet bloomed. However, the development towards him can be seen in history – or at least it can be seen in *Nietzsche's* presentation of history in the *Genealogy*.

To recap, original man was described as an instinctive, forgetful creature. This human-animal's simple but harmonious soul was thus characterized by a form of "*strong* health" (2.1). Because of innate aggressiveness and cruelty (2.6), however, the stronger, 'beasts of prey' of these animals conquered and enslaved others (2.17). The slaves of this terrible tyranny were forced to repress their instincts, which were then turned inwards, being released against the "entire old animal self" (2.18). Forgetfulness was thus overcome by the tremendous *sickness* of the bad conscience. Yet this is a sickness "*full of future*," opening up great new potential for man: the soul developed and with the emergence of consciousness and reason, man could subsequently improve and refine himself (2.16). Such potential can be led astray by the repressed desires, however, directing man towards *unnatural* ends. In such a case, the bad conscience grows to its "most terrible and sublime pinnacle" (2.19): the *moral* bad conscience, "the most terrible sickness that has thus far raged in man" (2.22). The effects of this moralization, however, can be resisted and fought against: "A reverse attempt would *in itself* be possible" (2.24). Through the tension of such a struggle, some of these free spirits could be refined and strengthened, leading towards the spirit imbued with *great health*. This *great* health is higher than the original *strong* health of the animal; it is self-conscious and creative, free to will new ends and ideals.[175] Of particular note, however, is that this great health that completes this 'history' *requires* the earlier development of the sickness of the bad conscience.[176]

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[175] There is a general similarity in this 'dialectic of health' with Rousseau's account of 'history' in the Second Discourse. Rousseau describes an original, animal-like man who was simple but harmonious. He then became social and thus increasingly alienated from himself. Just as Nietzsche does not seek a return to the savage 'beast of prey,' Rousseau also looks for a different form of healthiness, a new harmonious nature that is realized in the solitary walker, who, like the Sovereign Individual, corresponds with the philosopher.

[176] The *premoral* bad conscience, which has been treated as the emergence and development of the human soul, is much more important, introducing the potential for this new form of health. The *moral* bad

As mentioned, this end is not the *necessary* end of an inevitable historical process; rather, it must be actively willed and worked towards if it is to be realized. That it is treated as a historical process, however, is part of its being 'redemptive': the willing of this end accepts the sickness of the past as necessary. The sickness is made use of, being directed to the new end of *great health*. This was certainly not the original 'purpose' of the sickness – which simply emerged from a mindless tyranny – but it is given *new* purpose by this active willing (2.12). The blind process of history is thus given direction and meaning.[177] The effort of moving towards this great health is also 'redemptive' in that it gives man a sense of meaning. The danger of the "will to nothingness" emerges when man believes "existence on Earth contain[s] no goal," and that there is no answer to the question, "'to what end man at all?'" (3.28). The longing for meaning was part of what led to the moralization of man, whereby the ascetic ideal of self-denial was given absolute value because it offered the hope of redemption by means of the otherworldly. The positive, life-affirming ideal pointed towards in 2.24 recognizes this need for meaning – it even recognizes the appeal of 'redemption' – but this ideal is in the form of an earthly goal. It "gives back to the Earth its goal and to man his hope." The goal and hope for the free spirits *are* these exemplary men of great health who must be worked towards.

This willing of the future and of the past corresponds to what Zarathustra treats as 'redemption':

> I taught them all *my* creating and striving, to create and carry together into one what in man is fragment and riddle and dreadful accident; as creator, guesser of riddles, and redeemer of accidents, I taught them to work on the

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conscience, the 'sublime pinnacle' of the sickness, is not strictly necessary. Nietzsche sometimes treats it as leading man astray, but at other times, he treats it as having a use: it has introduced a tension into modern souls. Struggling against such a tension, one may grow in psychical strength. As such, this 'sickness,' which may be an impetus to higher health, could also be affirmed in those who reached such health.

[177] Such an attempt is also described in the effort of the free spirits to bring about "*new philosophers*"; actively willing that goal, they are trying to overcome "that gruesome dominion of chance and nonsense that has hitherto been called 'history'" (BGE 203). Similarly, cf. *Antichrist* 3 on the need for this active willing of the higher man: "The problem I thus pose is not what shall succeed mankind in the sequence of living beings (man is an *end*), but what type of man shall be *bred*, shall be *willed*, for being higher in value, worthier of life, more certain of a future. Even in the past this higher type has appeared often—but as a fortunate accident, as an exception, never as something *willed*. In fact, this has been the type most dreaded—almost *the* dreadful [...]"

> future and to redeem with their creation all that *has been*. To redeem what is past in man and to re-create all 'it was' until the will says, 'Thus I willed it! Thus I shall will it'—this I call redemption and this alone I taught them to call redemption. (Z 3.Tablets.3)

Such an end cannot yet be willed, however, for Nietzsche only offers a brief glimpse of such a possibility. He does not present the content of the life-affirming ideal in the *Genealogy*, nor does he provide a full portrait of the man of great health and nobility. Certainly, of the little that is said, there is a natural attraction to the healthiness and self-mastery described. But Nietzsche does not justify the standard by which this man could be called the highest, noblest type of man. The images of these nobler men do, however, serve the larger purposes of the polemic.

As has been mentioned, Nietzsche characterizes his post-*Zarathustra* works as part of his "no-saying, no-doing" task of clearing the way for his positive teaching. He also claims that these writings are "fish hooks," designed to attract those "related to [him]," who would aid him in his task (EH B.BGE; cf. GM p.7). The destructive effect aids in this recruiting effort: it is meant to stimulate and assist these spiritual kinfolk of Nietzsche's, to free their minds from the pervasive effects of modern morality. In this essay in particular, along with attacking other moral sentiments, Nietzsche aims to disturb the modern indiscriminate commitment to compassion and the accompanying repulsion to cruelty. Along with this, he is specifically seeking strong spirits, those who will lend him their strength.[178] Such spirits are themselves naturally attracted to strength, and Nietzsche's presentation of himself as a most audacious, adversarial man with such enormous ambition is part of the lure for the comrades he seeks.

The glimpse that Nietzsche provides of a positive ideal is important so that this work is not solely destructive. Nietzsche is utterly contemptuous towards modern anarchism ('misarchism'), nihilism and the desire for a 'letting go.' And if he merely destroyed beliefs and only taught others how to destroy, such anarchic, self-indulgent nihilism would be the likely result of his work. Part of this nihilism is nausea, the "weariness of man." The reader might have already suffered from such nausea, or he may

[178] These polemical ('lion') spirits are of the most immediate use to Nietzsche's task, those who "will lend [Nietzsche] their hands *for destroying*" the old ideals (EH B.BGE.2).

*now* as a consequence of Nietzsche's presentation of the sickness and madness that pervade human history. Of this nausea, Nietzsche speaks of the need for the healing effects provided by glimpsing a higher man:

> But grant me from time to time—if there are divine goddesses in the realm beyond good and evil—grant me the sight, but *one* glance of something perfect, wholly achieved, happy, mighty, triumphant, something still capable of arousing fear! Of a man who justifies *man*, of a complementary and redeeming lucky hit on the part of man for the sake of which one may still *believe in man*! (1.12)[179]

After exacerbating his reader's disgust at contemporary man, Nietzsche concludes the essay by providing a glimpse of a higher man. He thus provides hope that nobler possibilities do exist. Having committed himself to silence, Nietzsche directs the reader to his *Zarathustra*. Should the reader be moved by these images – and indeed, by Nietzsche himself – the reader will turn to *Zarathustra* and struggle with that work, searching for the noble ideal and the meaning that it provides. Moreover, Nietzsche does not merely *direct* the reader to *Zarathustra*; the *Genealogy* itself *prepares* the reader for the subsequent study of *Zarathustra*. The reader will see the danger of modern morality, the threat of nihilism and the need for this-worldly goals. He will see the possibility of giving meaning to the past through willing the end of a higher form of man. In regards to *ressentiment* and blame, recognizing their effects and power, the reader will be aided in the task of renouncing this black serpent, the spirit of revenge. But even more generally, outside of *Zarathustra*, through understanding the *Genealogy*'s moral psychology, the reader will have come to know himself better, recognizing the lower aspects of his nature that he might not have been aware of before (cf. BGE 26), and perhaps even awakened to higher longings in the response. In seeing the power of these emotional excesses, the reader will guard against them, against letting them cloud his judgment or drive him to moral prejudices – and in doing so, he will have gained a freer mind.

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[179] Cf. BGE 207 in regards to the complementary man, the philosopher of the future.

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